

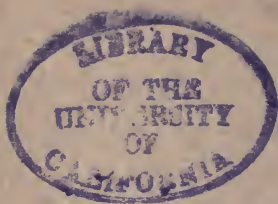
READING
ALOUD

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HARRISS O'GRADY



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READING ALOUD
AND LITERARY APPRECIATION



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READING ALOUD
AND
LITERARY APPRECIATION

BY
HARDRESS O'GRADY



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DEDICATION BY WAY OF PREFACE
TO WALTER RIPPMAHN

MY DEAR RIPPMAHN,

I had already intended to put your name on this book when you offered to read the proofs. After you had read them, and sent me all those valuable notes from which I seldom ventured to differ, I felt that your name ought to be written at the head of almost every chapter. If I am not yet prepared to accept your belief that in English it is the quality of the sounds rather than their variety which gives beauty, it is because I hope that you and I may elsewhere discuss the matter in relation to a standard English. Controversy between good friends is bound to make for progress. I need not remind you that this book is *not* a manual of phonetics, nor a book on elocution, but I make the statement here lest others should reproach me. It was a real encouragement to me when you, who are by training and instinct a phonetician and by good fortune a clear, effective public speaker, told me that you liked this book about literary appreciation. And since you like it, what better reason could I have for dedicating it to you?

Your grateful and sincere friend,
HARDRESS O'GRADY.

PURLEY, *May*, 1914.

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READING ALOUD

CHAPTER I

"THE proper use of poetry," says Mr. Henry Newbolt, "is to be heard or read." I have for my purpose torn this statement from its context. I will state my own view that the proper use of most poetry and of some prose is to be read aloud. I hope to prove that reading any verse or prose aloud is a sure test of its quality and a road to the personality of the writer. Reading aloud will, I believe, make enthusiasts of many and bring to their lives a pleasure which can add nothing to their wealth but much to their happiness. For it is still true that by communing with the lives of men whom we may never hope to meet, with whom in consequence there can be no question of gain or loss or petty difference, we are transported to a world somehow other and better than the transient life about us.

Reading aloud is different from reading to ourselves not only by the difference between sound and silence. There is an emotional difference. There is also an intellectual difference. It may be said

that when reading to ourselves we are conscious rather of the intellectual content of what we are reading, of the rapier-play of thought, or the engineering of the argument, of the reasoning qualities of the mind, or simply and usually of the development of plot. Whereas in reading aloud it is the emotions that have full play, sound is more closely linked with its old associations, words and phrases recalling by their mere music old figures from the past, while the cunning or subtle or abrupt or dazzling sequence of sounds has the greater effect on us because of its greater reality.

“ Music, when soft voices die
Vibrates in the memory.”

But this, too, is certain, that the music we hear, audible, sounding, reverberate to the ear, moves us more deeply than music we remember, heard silent and ghostly in the cloisters of the mind. If we wish to call up again a melody dear to us, we will sing it or hum it or play it upon some instrument. And if this be true of sounds exquisite merely for their sound, it is to a great extent true of sounds beautiful not only in themselves but also for their sense. In pure music there is little or no connection with sense. Emotion alone vibrates to its touch. In song-music, on the other hand, the sense is constantly joining in our appreciation of the sound, the sound in our understanding of the sense. Take a song so well known as the *Minstrel Boy* or the *Men of Harlech* or *Annie Laurie* or *Drink to me only with Thine Eyes*, where the matching of sound and sense

has reached a very high degree of perfection. I challenge those who know both words and music to say that they have not a greater appreciation of the words for the music, of the music for the words. Sound and sense interplay and to me at least the sense is ever at the back of my mind as I hum, or the music, if I read the words. So much is this so that when one of my students read out, *A man's a man for a' that*, as if it were any kind of poem, written, say, by a Dutchman for a modern Greek audience, I had to stop him because the sound and the rhythm jangled in my mind with the memory I have of the defiant, scornful march of the conventional musical setting. What we read silently cannot possess the same value as that which we read aloud. The music and the rhythm are obscured, they are heard as in a dream darkly, even as one dead is seen "as in a glass darkly," but if, when we are making the acquaintance of new work, we use the instrument that Nature has given us, the whole beauty of prose or verse shall spring alive. By a magic within the reach of any of us we shall see the writer's self face to face.

We are concerned in this book with reading aloud for the pleasure of others and of ourselves. But so far as audibility and fluency are concerned there is another kind of reading aloud. It is that of the clerk, the secretary, the chairman of a meeting, who have to read out a document or a statement. All that is here said of articulation, of fluency, of pausing and stress will apply both to reading aloud for pleasure and to reading aloud

for business purposes. But had we been concerned with the latter kind of reading this book would not have been worth writing. Yet there is a passive kind of pleasure in hearing even a business document well read.

How can reading aloud give pleasure to others? Is it not meant for children and for those who cannot read to themselves? We are shy in this country of doing anything that savours at all of acting and it is questionable whether most of the amateur acting that is done is not merely a gratification of certain ebullient characteristics in the amateur actor. It is the "dressing-up instinct." We are especially shy of reciting or reading and the public has a right to be shy of listening to recitation and reading. There is nothing more instructive to the attentive student of life than to see the shiver of ashamed apprehension that comes over an audience in a private house when they are made aware that some one dressed in ordinary clothes is about to recite or read aloud. There is a feeling that it ought to be done in costume. The reasons for this are simple. As a race we are not on the whole averse from beautiful things. There are no more appreciative audiences of great acting and singing and dancing and staging than the British and American. If we shrink from reading aloud and reciting it is because we have painful memories of such performances in the past. The average person who reads aloud is under the impression that no preparation is necessary for it, that any kind of delivery will do, and he has never escaped from the halting, shapeless

muttering that was associated with his learning to read at all. Some of us, too, have agonising memories of what was known at school as a reading-lesson. On the other hand, what shall we say of the over-emphatic and declamatory reader, whose robustious voice roars forth in pompous approval of itself? The fear of over-emphasis, of "giving oneself away" or of "making a fool of oneself" has led to the other type of reading aloud with which all of us are too painfully familiar. It is that form of reading in which the voice pours forth, placid and monotonous, or rather a-tonous changed curiously to something not human, aloof, as if the print had become possessed of a voice as unbeautiful as itself.

Yet when some one bolder than his fellows dares to read gracefully, intelligently, musically, he finds easily a pleased and sometimes a delighted audience. Even without the study which is advocated in this book a simple, fluent, intelligent delivery will give pleasure. I well remember how I became aware of this when many years ago I was asked to read aloud to a woman who was nearly blind. Somehow the knowledge of her blindness set me to read as well as I could. I must have thought, for I was young then, that her blindness had in some way dulled some part of her brain and that my reading must compensate for lack of understanding in my blind listener. Cannot it be said that many people are mentally blind and that our reading may and often does open the eyes of their mind to the beauty of some poem or of some book

which they could not realise before? In Mr. Graham Balfour's *Life of Robert Louis Stevenson* we read: "His voice was always of a surprising strength and resonance, even when phthisis had laid its hand most heavily upon him. It was the one gift he really possessed for the stage, and in reading aloud he was unsurpassed. In his full, rich tones there was a sympathetic quality that seemed to play directly on the heart-strings like the notes of a violin. Mrs. Stevenson writes: 'I shall never forget Louis reading Walt Whitman's *Out of the Cradle endlessly rocking*, followed by *O Captain, my Captain* to a room-full of people, some of whom had said that *Whitman lacked sentiment and tenderness*. All alike, men and women, sat spell-bound during the reading, and I have never seen any audience so deeply moved.' Nor (adds Mr. Balfour), for my part, shall I forget his rendering of the Duke of Wellington Ode on the evening after the news of Tennyson's death had arrived at Vailima."

I remember how, when I was about twenty-three, I told a colleague that I did not understand Browning's *Bishop Blougram's Apology*. This man was a classical scholar of considerable attainments, an odd sort of fellow in many ways, clinging with a pathetic fidelity to a quaint garb of many colours which he wore on every possible occasion except at dinner parties. He was perhaps disliked most for his midnight habit of dropping in for a monologue. He had an uneven, rather thin high-pitched voice and a slight lisp at times,

with over-sibilisation at others. As a result of that rash confession he visited my rooms at eleven o'clock of the same evening when it was already past time for bed. He had a Browning in his pocket and he read *Bishop Bloughram's Apology* from end to end. In spite of all this the man held me from the moment he had read the first few lines and the poem became as clear as I could wish. I shall never forget the circumstances. His reading not only did for me what silent reading had failed to do, but it altered entirely my somewhat unfavourable estimate of the man.

I mind me, too, of another pedagogue who had to deal with an extremely difficult problem. He had a set of young fellows whose early training had left them deficient in common courtesy and kindness. He lectured to them on English literature and it was part of his method to read to them masses of English poetry and prose. At the end of their time with him the morale of those men, or at any rate their conduct in his presence, was so much altered that they noticed the change themselves and gave him a very fine edition of Browning in *appreciation of his memorable lectures*. Knowing the man and his students I am certain that his magnificent interpretation had a great deal to do with the change.

But there exist unfortunately a number of people who imagine that without work or practice, ignoring the need of some sort of technique, they can read aloud. Against them the yawns, fidgeting and final avoidance of their acquaintances shall bear testimony. The fact is, these people *read-to-themselves*

aloud. The audience, the space between themselves and the listener, are forgotten. And they forget, or do not care, that the listeners have not got before them the printed book. Rhythm, cadence, melody, meaning, all go by the board. They have their victim in their clutch, and since when have victims been treated intelligently?

They *read-to-themselves* aloud. I do not mean that they *read aloud* to themselves. That is altogether another matter. For no less application, no less conscious quest of meaning, cadence, music and rhythm are needed for reading aloud to oneself than for reading aloud to others. It is precisely these searchings after right stress, right pauses, right intonation that shall reveal to us hidden beauties in the construction of verse or of the prose before us. And as we work at our poem, questioning ourselves the while, light shall break ever and anon, jerking from us the abrupt, emphatic, stomach-stirring "Ha" of deep enjoyment. I have spent many hours on preparing French poems to read aloud to others, but the time passed swiftly, for I was learning every hour to see some new beauty in what I prepared.

But sometimes I would find that what had seemed good when read silently was meretricious or merely honeyed, or inconsequent or inflated or insincere. The living voice guided by the mind is a trusty interpreter, it rings true or false with the truth or falsity of the author. But mind and voice must be trained to work in close conjunction. The suppleness of voice which we require to answer at

once to the meaning of the author, as shown to us by the mind, is a technical perfection all can acquire. Not every one, it is true, can achieve the highest degree of reading aloud, for temperaments differ. One man can answer more quickly to emotion or shade of feeling than another. But I believe it to be equally true that by preparing a poem to read aloud, to others or to ourselves, the voice reacts upon the mind, and we may draw out from ourselves hidden potentialities of emotion. Groping for truth we shall find that in us too a hidden poet lies. Answering slowly at first, then more rapidly to the beauty of the written word, which is now sounded alive, the vital embodiment of *speech*, man's gift of communication with his fellows, we shall be admitted presently to that great republic wherein all men are equal, all men are free, and all men converse together. Out of the ruck of mere writers, women and men who expressed in superficial language superficial sensations, there will spring the men and women who have remained to posterity or who will remain to posterity because of their deep sincerity which has made them express in words which ring true their beliefs, their doubts, their joys, their agonies. Deep calls to deep. That "greater imbibing of the common heart" which is theirs will find many an echo answering to their cry from our hearts. The emotions which they felt, the experiences which they observed, will find their counterpart in us and we shall be, because of this community of feeling and experience, something less lonely than before in the depths of our being.

Many years ago I met at an Old Boys' gathering a school-friend who had emigrated to Canada. There he lived alone in the wilds. "I ride twenty miles once a fortnight into Calgary," he said, "to fetch my washing." He had been a dull fellow in school though he was a good boxer and cricketer and football player out of it. The bottom seat in every class was reserved for him. He read little or not at all. When he came to the meeting of Old Boys he told me that he had come to England to get an outfit. He had been lucky in ranching but lived alone and did his housekeeping himself. He was going to spend "a lot of money on books, poetry, you know. I read it out aloud at night. I have built a library on to my log cabin." Silence and solitude had driven him to sound aloud for company the words he read, and this had brought out in him a hidden love of poetry. May we not imagine the spirits of the writers stretching out to become one with the soul of this lonely man sitting in a log cabin twenty miles from the nearest fellow-man?

CHAPTER II

TECHNICAL excellence is within the reach of all who care to practice and to give the requisite thought to the work. The material for reading aloud well may be considered to consist of a phonetic part and of a critical part, but the phonetic runs into the critical work, that is to say, the phonetic is the mechanical means by which the reasoned result is achieved.

As I have pointed out in the preface this book does not pretend to be a manual on the science of phonetics, that is, of speech sounds. Readers who seek for detailed information will find many excellent books on the subject. But for our present purpose it is still necessary to ask ourselves in a very general way how speech sounds are produced.

It will be conceded that without breath we could make no speech sounds. Most human beings find it satisfactory and more comfortable to make these sounds by driving the air *out* of the mouth. But it is quite possible to make some sounds which convey a meaning by sucking the air *into* the mouth. The result is interesting but unpleasant. Now why should the air escaping from the mouth produce sounds? Are speech sounds always produced when air escapes from the mouth? And if not always,

what instrument is there which converts air into sound or allows it to continue as air, and nothing more?

The blast which is converted into speech sounds is made from the air we have inhaled by the mighty bellows of our lungs. Leaving the chest it enters the throat and there passes between the vocal chords. These can be brought close together or separated widely at will. Or they can be closed entirely. When they are so closed the breath is arrested and the result is a cough or the sound we make when we are clearing our throats. In English this closing does not correspond to any speech sound. In German it does. When the chords are wide apart the air passes freely between them and issues, silent, into the mouth or nose. When they are brought sufficiently close together the stream of air causes them to vibrate. We get a musical note. This note or series of notes is called voice. Sounds in which there is this musical quality, this vibration of the chords are called voiced sounds.

But there are other sounds, which are formed in the mouth after the air has left the throat, which have no voice. And the voiced sounds are also formed into different kinds of speech sounds in the mouth. Both the voiced and unvoiced are modified by arrest or restriction of the stream of air. But whatever a sound may be and however it may be modified in the mouth it must be either voiced or unvoiced. That is the first great division of sounds, and we can tell one from the other by this test, that we can sing a scale on a voiced sound whereas we

can make no musical difference to an unvoiced sound. Produce a pure d (not dee but "d"); then produce a pure t (not tee but "t"). Place both hands over the ears and pronounce first the d and then the t. A faint buzz will be felt for the d but no such buzz for the t. The sound d is voiced, while t is not. Now say s as in hiss, followed by z as in his or whizz. Try to sing a scale or hum *God save the King* on the sound s. It will be impossible, but the sound z can be made to carry any musical variations. The first in this case is unvoiced. There is no vibration of the chords. The second (that is z as in *zeal*) is voiced.

Besides being able to vibrate, the vocal chords are susceptible of another change. They can, when in vibration, be tightened or relaxed. When tightened they give forth a high note, when they are made slack they give forth a low note. Between the highest possible note and the lowest possible there are an infinite number of variations. Some of these are picked out and distinguished one from the other by the human ear. These are the notes of music. This power to give forth a succession of different notes at the will of the speaker or singer makes of the human voice an instrument of great delicacy. With this music of the voice, which in reading aloud is intonation or expression, we are not yet concerned. We will reserve it for a later chapter.

All the sounds then come from the larynx voiced or unvoiced, but they are not yet (with the exception of h) speech sounds. Punch a man in the ribs and he will emit a voiced sound, but though it may vary

from a vocal murmur to a vocal roar, it is not yet a speech sound. It is not articulated. It is *huh* (or *eu* as in French).

When the air-stream reaches the very back of the mouth it may pass out through the nose or through the mouth itself. If it is voiced and vibrates in the nasal cavity before escaping it will alter in quality, it will have nasal resonance. If it vibrates in the mouth it will have mouth resonance. The reader possibly remembers that when he was a child he experimented on the voice by speaking into the cavity of a water-jug or into a bucket or through a roll of music. It was one of the great discoveries of my youth. The memory of this discovery thrills me yet. I am stirred to go and do it again. The air-stream, we say, alters in quality when it passes into or through a new cavity. Each different cavity through which it passes has certain powers of selecting. What does it select? Well, a blast of air vibrating from the rush of its forced passage through a narrow space, or from the trembling contact of the chords, has a ground tone and a number of other tones which are in mathematical relation to it, the super-tones or harmonics. Each cavity through which the air passes will stifle some of these harmonics and increase the effect of others on the human ear. We speak of the resonance of these cavities and the first great difference in resonance is that between nasal resonance and mouth resonance. There are few nasal sounds in pure English.

When the air passes out through the mouth it may be checked for a moment, then released. Or,

it may be allowed an entirely free passage while the tongue and lips in varying positions alter the shape of the resonance chamber and so alter the sounds. Or the air may be driven through such a very restricted passage that it produces a slight rubbing sound.

When the air vibrates and has *free passage* through the mouth, and is moulded differently by differing shapes of the inside of the mouth, the resulting sounds are vowels. When it is *checked* or *restricted* we have consonants, whether voiced or unvoiced. When the sound has an element of explosiveness, as in b, p, d, t, g, k, resulting from the lips being closed and then opened suddenly, or some part of the tongue being placed against the palate and then brought away, we call the sound a plosive. When there is an element of rubbing, as when the front part of the tongue is brought very near to the back of the teeth, we call the sound a fricative, as in z, s, the sound in *pleasure*, in *judge*, at the end of *catch*, in *cash*, in f and v. The first sound in "it isn't the *hunting* that *hurts* the *horses* but the *hammer*, *hammer*, *hammer* on the *hard high* road" is a fricative produced by the vocal chords being very close together but not close enough to vibrate musically. It is a hard breathing, if you like to call it so unscientifically.

Let us summarize. Outpouring breath is necessary to produce English speech sounds. This breath

(1) is allowed to pass silent between the vocal chords, *or*
is given voice by them,

- (2) is given a nose resonance *or*
a mouth resonance,
- (3) it is, if voiced, allowed a free passage through the mouth, being "moulded" by varying shapes of the mouth channel into vowels *or* it is checked (whether voiced or unvoiced) and released with an explosion, forming plosive consonants *or* it is restricted, giving a slight rubbing sound, or hissing or hushing sound, forming fricative consonants.

Now, audibility means comprehensibility, and an audience will be able to understand what is being read only if it recognises the component parts of the words. If the mouth is allowed to become formless the words convey little or nothing. They are, in fact, not words but ejaculations. It is true that if orders are being given, when certain shouts are by long acceptance understood to refer to certain movements, the speaker may shout *oh er ah* and his fellow conspirators will know that he means "Shoulder arms" or "Order arms," according to the position of their rifles at the time. "Hun!" will mean "Attention," and so on. But reading aloud or speech-making is not yet organised on that basis, though the semaphore arm-work of some politicians bids one hope for some such consummation in the elections of the future.

Audibility rests mainly on the movements of tongue and lips. It is no doubt possible to compensate for less lip movement by more tongue movement and so on. That is what the

ventriloquist does. But such voice production is mere trickery and probably affects the tone of the voice unfavourably. A normal use of tongue and lips will give all the clearness that can be desired. With this object of audibility in view let us continue our examination of the formation of sounds. We will take the consonants first, then the vowels. It may be said roughly that the consonants give to the word its structure, the vowels, its beauty.

THE CONSONANTS

Beginning with the lips, we have the following positions and sounds :

With lips altogether closed and opened suddenly (air out through MOUTH)

voiced b as in *bag*,

unvoiced p as in *pap*.

With lips altogether closed and then opened suddenly (air out through NOSE)

voiced m as in *main*.

With lips very close, but not closed (air out through MOUTH)

voiced w as in *were*,

unvoiced wh as in *where*.

With lower lip very close to, but not touching the upper teeth (air out through MOUTH)

voiced v as in *vary*,

unvoiced f as in *fairy*.

With tip of the tongue placed behind the upper teeth (air out through MOUTH)

voiced th as in *then, that, bathe*,

unvoiced th as in *think, thatch, bath*.

With tongue hollowed to form a narrow channel, and placed just behind upper teeth but not touching (air out through MOUTH)

voiced z (or s) as in *zeal*, *raise*,

unvoiced s (or c) as in *seal*, *race*.

With tongue nearly in the same position as for z or s but touching and coming away suddenly (air out through MOUTH)

voiced d as in *den*,

unvoiced t as in *ten*.

With tongue in the same position as above, with the same movement as for d and t (but with the air escaping from the NOSE)

voiced n as in *Nan*.

With tongue drawn back a little from the position of d and t and n with the blade very near the upper front part of the mouth but not touching (air out through MOUTH)

voiced, the sound in *vision*, *judge*,

unvoiced, the sound in *mission*, *church*.

A position of the tongue a little farther back than this gives us as a fricative (air out through MOUTH)

voiced, the sound in *yacht*, *yes*.

With back of the tongue touching and opening suddenly from the back of the soft palate (air out through MOUTH)

voiced g as in *got*,

unvoiced k as in *cot*.

With same position and movement, but with the air escaping through the NOSE,

voiced ng as in *going* (not *goin'*).

With a "hard breathing" without voice and with the air just rubbing against the edges of the chords or simply rubbing against the mouth without approximation of the chords (air out through MOUTH)

h as in Hearty Harriet hailed her Harry.

I have omitted r and l.

There are two kinds of r. Both are voiced, mouth sounds. The first is produced by placing the tongue in a position between those of z and the sound in pleasure with slight curling back of tip. It is a rubbed sound. The second is produced by giving to the front part of the tongue a rapid vibrating movement like that of an electric bell. This is the trilled r, the r used in elocutionary French, the Welsh r. It used to be an English r and I advocate its use in reading aloud.

There are also two l sounds. Both are mouth sounds, both are voiced in English. In both the air escapes over the sides of the tongue, instead of over the middle top of it. In the l which we pronounce in the word of *willing*, the tongue is rather more forward and the point is not curled up. The back of the tongue drops. In the l we pronounce at the end of *little* the point is curled backwards and the back of the tongue is raised.

THE VOWELS.

All English vowels are voiced and oral sounds. The difference between one vowel and another is due to the alteration of the resonance chamber by

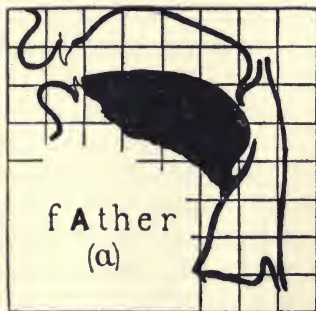
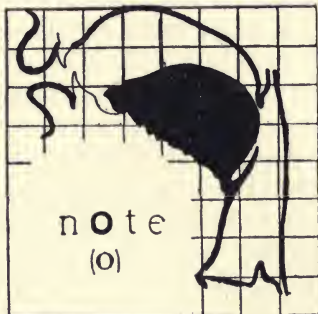
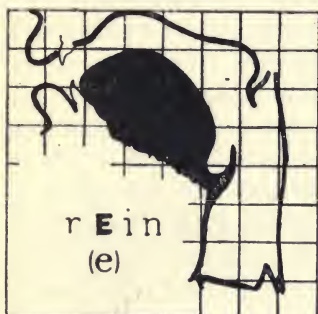
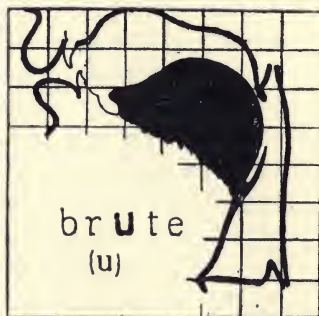
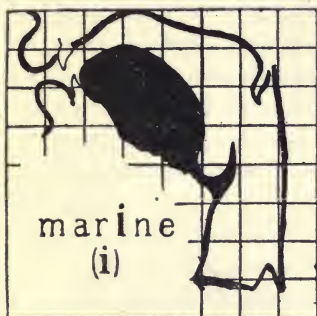
alterations of the mouth and tongue. The accompanying diagrams will give a clear idea of the position of the tongue for some of the vowels. The reader should compare these tongue positions with the following table of vowel sounds :—

TONGUE RAISED :

FRONT OF MOUTH	BACK OF MOUTH
(vowel in <i>we</i> , <i>green</i>)	(vowel in <i>boot</i>)
(vowel in <i>bit</i>)	(vowel in <i>cook</i>)
(vowel in <i>pen</i>)	(first vowel in <i>go</i>)
(vowel in <i>pear</i> , <i>hair</i>)	(vowel in <i>nor</i> , <i>awe</i>)
(vowel in <i>bat</i>)	(vowel in <i>not</i> , <i>gone</i>)
(first vowel in <i>town</i>)	(vowel in <i>arm</i>)

The tongue curves over in front for the front vowels and curves over at the back for the back vowels. It drops from the position of *ee* to the bottom and middle of the mouth for the first vowel sound in *town*, *wide*, and for the vowel sound in *are*, *bath*. Then it rises and goes back gradually to the position of *oo* in *moon*. The lips change from a long, narrow shape in *ee* to a wide open shape in the vowel sound of *are* and on to a small, rounded shape for *oo*. The lower jaw falls and rises.

The reader may wonder why all this talk about the formation of sounds is necessary. It is because the dropping of consonants obscures the meaning, while the alteration of the vowel sounds obscures the meaning sometimes and invariably interferes with the melody of verse and prose. I cannot emphasize too strongly that this accurate use of lips and tongue is necessary for clear speech. Even a reader with a weak voice, that is, a lack of force in



his breathing and a lack of vibrance of the vocal chords, will find his voice carry farther by articulating clearly. Articulation is to a sound what the bow is to an arrow. It speeds it forth on its way. In the appendix will be found sets of exercises designed to give practice in the clear pronunciation of consonants. In some passages given for reading aloud the terminal consonant has been omitted, in others certain consonants are printed in heavy type. Readers will be able to add to the sets of queer sentences and hard sayings from their own store, while any passage in verse or prose will be found suitable for reading with a match between the teeth or a stone in the mouth. This exercise, from which Demosthenes, we are told, was not averse, reminds me of an incident which occurred when I was an assistant house-master. I was taking "preparation" one night when a very small boy burbled something at me from his desk. I bade him speak up. He did something to his mouth with his hand and in a much clearer voice said, "Please, sir, may I *put my tooth in the waste-paper basket?*"

While good articulation is indispensable, it is by no means pleasant to hear a reader driving out his consonants like corks popping, or mouthing out his vowels. This over-emphasis lends itself more easily to ridicule than many other eccentricities and an illustrious exponent of the method once gave a golden opportunity to a journalist on the prowl for copy. Speaking of his victim the writer said:—

"But though he brought to the service of his two offices the same gifts and qualities, the same

voice of resounding dignity, the clarity of enunciation that marks the well ordered mind, the perfect pronunciation of names, it was noted by observers that with the intuitive insight of the true artist he differentiated their employment with a perfect estimation of the subtle distinction in spirit, character and atmosphere between the two functions. In the business hubbub and bustle of — his voice had a business ring. When a member of the firm of Thomson and Johnstone was inquired for, he called out the name in a tone appropriate to a business transaction. Here he pitched his vibrant voice a trifle above the middle register, so that it would carry above the hubbub to the furthest corners of the crowded chamber. But so pure and round was his tone and so easy and natural his production that his almost unceasing calling never got upon the nerves of members, nor interfered with their business conversations. And so perfect was his expression of consonant values that there was no possibility of confusion to a representative of Thomson and Johnstone when he cried an inquiry for the firm of Thompson and Johnson."

All of which is admirable, but I should prefer that references to my own enunciation should be less ironically expressed. Pronunciation, while it should be beautiful should also be unobtrusive, and it is part of the art of the speaker to conceal the fact that he has been at some pains to use full vowels and to make his speech plain. For pronunciation is only the interpreter of the beauty within.

CHAPTER III

QUESTION a man's pronunciation of a word and you offend him. You have insinuated subtly that he is a low fellow, uneducated and unaware of good form and correct fashion in the manner of his speech. Worse, you have set him right, and who would not prefer to blunder ignorantly to being set right by a fellow-mortal? Tell him that you have observed an exceptional number of weak forms in his speech and he will go about to discover a moral imperfection in your private life; lift your eye-brows when he calls the dreadful word "pedagogy" with a gug-gee instead of a gug-gug and he will lie in wait for months to hear you stumbling in your speech. In a measure it is of course true that gross mispronunciations display ignorance of fashion and are to be placed in the same category as the wearing of a top-hat with brown boots or of a frock-coat with a bowler. But apart from these deadly sins it is not commonly understood that the members of one family vary in their pronunciation one from the other. The word "castle," for instance, will be pronounced by one member of the family with the a sound as in father. By another it will be given with the a sound of bag. Indeed the same person may say *absolute* as if it

were *lecoot* and *lute* (the instrument) as if it were *loot*, and will give the pure short open *o* sound in *position*, but will sound the same letter as a vocal murmur (like *er* with the *r* mute) in the word *composition* or *imposition*. The same word may be pronounced in three different ways in the same family, as a keen ear will detect.*

The Scots or Irish or Yorkshire speaker despises the Southron for his clipped speech and lack of variety in sound-scale, while the Southron, speaking with little lip movement and less tongue movement, smiles with amusement at the provincial or talks sentimental nonsense about the charm of brogue. Roughly it may be said that all English is divided into three kinds. First, there is the Provincial non-manufacturing town English, which with a few exceptions has a greater variety of vowel and consonant. Secondly, there is the English of the cultured classes. Thirdly, we find the English of the suburban middle-class and sub-middle-class round London, and probably in the neighbourhood of one or two other manufacturing towns. Fourthly, standing by itself, a thing of wonder and awe to all who do not speak it, is the true, the only Cockney of London's coster and his kind. It is dangerous

* Readers who are not familiar with the tracts and pamphlets of the Simplified Spelling Society should certainly set about to obtain copies. They will provide genuine amusement and instruction, for the statements therein contained are all verified by expert phoneticians and by the late Professor Skeat, the etymologist. It is not necessary to desire a reform of our spelling to enjoy these pamphlets. They are bound to raise in the reader's mind all sorts of questions with regard to the vagaries of our pronunciation. (44, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.)

to dogmatize in such matters, or to attempt to delimit exactly the peculiarities and boundaries of these main classes. Every dialect has its own phonetic system and the cultured English of Oxford is not the cultured English of Cambridge or of the clergy or of the aristocracy or of the spinster of the type that is now dying out. But we are on safe ground when we say that it is easy to show by a series of diagrams that the most varied and energetic of these types is the best kind of provincial. *And I venture to think that for some things broad coster Cockney has claims.* The English of the cultured and of the suburban classes tends to become less and less varied from year to year. The vowel sounds are tending to become either *-er* as in *mother*, or the sound of *u* in *but*. The word *mother* is a fair instance of such degeneracy. It contains both the neutral sound of *u* in *but* and the vocal murmur of *er* (with *r* mute). In Wiltshire, on the other hand, it has a first vowel sound of *-or* in the word *north* and if the second vowel has followed the general tendency and become a vocal murmur the last consonant is pronounced, certainly not very prettily, as a rubbed *r* with the tip of the tongue bent over and far back into the hollow of the mid-palate. It will be said that this degeneration follows a natural law, that speech obeys the hustle of the present day, and that to speak in ordinary conversation with all the sounds carefully formed and delivered would be pedantic and ridiculous. Possibly. It is beginning to be pedantic and ridiculous to do anything very well, and I confess that in my ordinary speech I do

not pronounce as I should like to pronounce. The fact is, we want a Standard English, taught everywhere and adhered to, an English as beautiful as the artists, etymologists and phoneticians can make it. But such a standard is outside the scope of this little book.

In poetry and in reading aloud generally I submit there is a case for the restoration of certain sounds, more especially of the *wh* in *white*, *where*, *which* and so on, and of the trilled *r*. Perhaps even the *l* in words like *calm* might come back. Let us take the lines by Mr. Yeats in "The Stolen Child" —

"Come away, O human child
To the waters and the wild,
With a fairy hand in hand,

From a world more full of weeping than you can understand."

and trill the *r* at the end of *waters*, in *fairy*, *world*, *understand*, give the vowels in *child* clearly as two sounds, the *a* in *hand* as in Welsh, and so also in *stand*. Read the lines out first in the ordinary lax South English cultured pronunciation, then with the changes I have suggested. Do you dare to say that the fuller form, with the altered vowels, the restored consonants, is not more beautiful than the conventional colloquial pronunciation? Unusual? Of course it is unusual, just as it would be unusual to see the average man running like a Zulu, who runs with the spring and balance and impetus and grace of the spring-buck. But the Zulu is the more beautiful runner for all that his running is unusual.

To speak well in poetry restores to it a native nobility of sound that is, however deeply hidden, part of the heritage of our race.

This restitution of sounds should be practised. Since these details are only part of reading aloud, such a restoration will be merged in the general effect, to the musical value of which it will have added greatly. Take, again, the sound at the end of *running, jumping, singing*. Why should this sound be converted into *n*, as in *sin* and *din* and *thin*? Of the two sounds which is the more æsthetic? The sound *ng* is the nasal consonant corresponding to the mouth plosive *g*. The sound *n* is the nasal consonant corresponding to the mouth plosive *d*. Æsthetically, it will be said, there is not a pin to choose between them. True, but if *ng* as a separate sound is abolished altogether at the end of such words then one more speech sound disappears from the music of the language. Once more the variety which gives beauty to speech will be lessened. And my whole plea is for a great abundance and variety of speech sounds. Would music have reached its present development if composers had restricted themselves to the twelve notes of one octave?

Again, for the reasons I have given, I object to the growing tendency to nasalize sounds which should not be nasalized. Nasalization is due to an excessive amount of air being allowed to vibrate in the nasal cavities when it ought to have vibrated in the mouth, thus producing nasal resonance or twang. The organ which allows air to be diverted through mouth or nose at will is the uvula or end of the soft

palate. Let the uvula hang down and the passage to the nose is opened, thus admitting air which will produce the twang in greater or less degree. Or a growth may prevent the uvula from closing, with the same results. This twang is odious to me, but there may be many who admire it. A whole nation and a great Dominion have adopted it as a prevailing element of their speech. But here in England at any rate this twang is not generally admired. To detect it we may either ask our friends if they notice it when we speak, or we may listen with the utmost care to ourselves as we speak. After that we must practice exercises which alternately raise and depress the uvula, closing and opening the passage to the nose, till we have complete control over that organ and can distinguish nasals carefully in our speech.

But if the nasal twang is odious to me it is not because of its nasal resonance but because, when we speak mouth vowels with a nasal twang, we are *confusing* the oral sounds with the nasal. In point of fact I regard the true nasals *m*, *n*, *ng* as beautiful in composition. Combined with the rounded vowels of *o* in *grow*, of *oo* in *moon*, and other rounded and open vowels they have a peculiar musical quality. That poets are conscious of this can be seen by such lines as Tennyson's "Lin, lan, lone, of evening bells," and Keats'

". . . forlorn,
Forlorn, the sound is like a bell."

But if we nasalize without rhyme or reason we take away from the nasal consonants the peculiar

effect which is theirs. Once more we have stolen from the variety which makes for beauty in speech. If all the bells in London rang with the same chimes how much should we lose of variety and charm.

“Oranges and lemons
Said the bells of Saint Clements.”

“When will you pay me
Said the bells of old Bailey.”

And shall I, who have been for many years an exile in foreign lands, not testify to the emotion with which I hear the solemn, deep-toned and resonant notes of Big Ben, which mean London to me and home and things English and the beautiful language that is ours?

At the end of the book will be found exercises for practice in these matters and a set of poems to be read aloud wherein the poet has made full use of the true nasals to add to the music of his verse. Before closing this chapter, however, I will quote one such poem. When reading it attention should be fixed on the nasal sounds, written in ordinary spelling as m, n, ng in *Tom, Nan, thing* and *think*. These sounds of course are only found in composition, that is, in combination with vowels. Mr. Daniel Jones, who is our foremost phonetician, assures me that in the experiments he has made with his measuring and detecting instruments he has found that the vowel preceding or following a nasal consonant is itself slightly nasalized. This we

might expect, the uvula beginning to lower itself in preparation for the true nasal or not having closed altogether after the consonant. But this is *only to be detected by instruments*. If the unaided ear detects it, it is bad. Here is Swinburne's poem. The reader shall judge for himself how beautiful is the poet's use of nasal sounds to add to the melody of his verse. If these nasals are held a little, so as to increase their effect, the result will gain enormously. Obviously, the poem should be read aloud.

MONOTONES

" Because there is but one truth ;
Because there is but one banner ;
Because there is but one light ;
Because we have with us our youth
Once, and one chance and one manner
Of service and then the night ;

" Because we have found not yet
Any way for the world to follow
Save only that ancient way ;
Whosoever forsake or forget,
Whose faith soever be hollow,
Whose hope soever grow grey ;

" Because of the watchwords of Kings
That are many and strange and unwritten,
Diverse, and our watchword is one ;
Therefore, though seven be the strings,
One string, if the harp be smitten,
Sole sounds till the tune be done.

“ Sounds without cadence or change
In a weary monotonous burden,
Be the keynote of mourning or mirth ;
Free, but free not to range ;
Taking for crown and for guerdon
No man’s praise upon earth.

“ Saying one sole word evermore,
In the ears of the charmed world saying,
Charmed by spells to its death ;
One that chanted of yore
To a tune of the sword-sweep’s playing
In the lips of the dead blew breath ;

“ Therefore, I set not mine hand
To the shifting of changed modulations,
To the smiting of manifold strings ;
While the thrones of the throned men stand,
One song for the morning of nations,
One for the twilight of Kings.

“ One chord, one word and one way,
One hope as our law, one heaven,
Till slain be the great one wrong ;
Till the people it could not slay,
Risen up, have for one star seven,
For a single, a sevenfold song.”

A. C. SWINBURNE.

CHAPTER IV

WHILE the object of reading aloud is purely æsthetic, compounded of intellectual and sensuous delight, the means to its attainment are physical, and, as in the taking of other forms of exercise, the reader is subject to fatigue. Now it is a common experience with men who ride or play games or have to undergo great physical strain in the pursuit of their labours that training of the muscles makes for economy of effort. I remember once when I was digging the hard, brown veldt into the semblance of a garden, digging, that is, a considerable space of ground, I suddenly fell into a certain rhythm and swing of body and, though I was handling the spade at a pace actually less rapid than before, I found myself covering more ground and digging more efficiently. I had stumbled by chance on to the right way of digging. This training of the muscles to do the work in a certain way enables the worker or the player to go on much longer than he could otherwise have done. So it is with reading. The great muscles we use are those below and about the lungs, for we cannot read without breathing, and we breathe by the reflex action of the diaphragm, but to a great extent subject to our control.

We use the lungs like a pair of bellows. Any attitude or trick of holding ourselves which interferes with the clear passage of the breath from the lungs to the mouth or nose will greatly diminish the air supply so that we shall sooner or later throw an undue strain on the vocal chords or on the lungs. We may put it this way, that if a man who had been accustomed to lifting heavy weights with both hands suddenly lost one of his arms he would find the weight to which he had been accustomed an impossible strain for the remaining arm. Of course this comparison is only partly true, because there are numerous cases of men who have lost a limb and who have in time taught the other limb to do as much work as both used to do. It was a matter of long practice, but they could depend upon the unfettered use of the remaining limb. But in the case of the throat there is nothing else to compensate for the injury to the vocal chords. We do not by misuse injure one chord but both chords. We could not compensate for lack of vibration or responsiveness in our chords by causing the nose or ears to vibrate. Again, the passage of the air from the lungs to the mouth may be likened to the passage of water through a hose pipe. If we twist the hose at a sharp angle or place a weight upon it at any point the time will come when the force of the water will injure the hose. So if we contort our throat by a bad attitude, a bent head or a head twisted sideways when we are reading we shall soon begin to suffer. The vocal chords must have room in which to vibrate and they must have air to make

them vibrate. They do not vibrate without the rush of air which flings them, as it were, to and fro. We can attempt to make them do so just as we can ride a bicycle on the rims after the tire has burst. But throat and rim will show the effects and the throat is not made of steel. I remember a friend, who was consumptive, telling me that before his breakdown he had found his breathing becoming more and more difficult and his throat—for he used his voice much—suffering more and more from soreness till the time came when he simply ceased to speak at all. No amount of will-power, he told me, could compel him to continue articulate speech. He told me also that the strain he put upon himself by trying to make his chords vibrate affected his larynx so much that for months after, in spite of restored general health, he suffered from sore throat. It may seem a paradox but I can declare from my own experience that provided one treats one's throat fairly, without tightening the exterior muscles about it and provided one does not compress the chest in any way, the more one speaks and reads aloud the stronger, the less subject to fatigue does the throat become. In Charles Darwin's book, *The Expression of the Human Emotions*, the curious reader will find definite statements with regard to the connection between muscular constriction and hoarseness of the voice. It must be remembered that the outside muscles of the neck play no part in the delicate production of voice, but they may interfere with it. To put Darwin's points briefly, the animal when in anger tightens certain

muscles to be ready for attack or flight. Gradually this tightening communicates itself to all the remaining muscles of the body. The erection of the hair on the neck of the dog is an instance of this. In the human animal this tightening extends to the throat, with the result that the chords are unnaturally tightened and strained and the voice rises in pitch or becomes hoarse. Now let us see from what habits or tricks this straining of the throat or compression of the chest may arise. I remember a tailor asking me once on which leg I stood most. I told him that I stood on both equally, but he informed me in that inimitable manner proper to tailors that experience had led him to realize that no man stood on both legs with an equal poise but that each leaned rather on one than on the other. This trick of attitude he was in the habit of taking into account when he was cutting trousers so that one leg should not, on the uneven stander, appear longer than the other. Now it is precisely this habit of standing more on one leg than on the other which causes many readers to feel unduly tired. It is for this reason, that the body is thrown out of the perpendicular and gives to one lung less liberty than to the other. Leaning against a desk when speaking or reading, or standing for any time with the hands upon a rail in front of one, the body bent forward, placing one's arm upon the desk or on the arm of the chair, sitting with one leg crossed over the other, placing the arms close to the chest will, if the attitude is not altered, produce a feeling of weariness which ought not to have been. In the

same way we shall fatigue ourselves if we read with the head bent forward or sideways, for we wrench the throat out of the perpendicular and interfere with the passage of the breath or the vibration of the vocal chords.

Reading aloud itself is a good breathing exercise if we practise it wisely, but in order to read for long without fatigue it is essential that we should do everything in our power to develop our breathing. I am a little sceptical of the breathing exercises advocated by some experts as they appear to me to be a strain on the lungs. But of this I am not a good judge, for reasons of health. The connection between good speaking, good breathing and general health is close, but I prefer to get my breathing exercises by some system natural to a healthy animal rather than by some piece of machinery. Walking is the most easily attainable form of exercise. It gives full and normal play to the lungs, especially if we can vary the levels over which we walk. To this may be added boxing, singing, step-dancing, whistling and flute playing, while reading aloud itself, provided the body is straight, the head held well up, the lungs at liberty, and the vocal chords unstrained is a means of strengthening the breathing. It will be seen that the list given of good exercises for our purpose is composed of forms of amusement in which only the merry in heart indulge. Readers of the works of the late William James will remember that one of his theories was this, that when a man went through the outward movements and manifestations of an emotion he begins to feel the

emotion. A man, in short, is cheerful, because he performs the actions of cheerfulness. If I draw back my lips from my gums, snarl, curve my fingers as if I were about to scratch, crouch down, roll my eyes and roar like a lion I shall presently become really angry. (Or let us say in any case that somebody else will.) It is a pleasant theory. We shall have happiness at command. Thus if enthusiasts will take long walks, practise step-dancing, box, sing and whistle, no matter how depressed they may feel, they will become cheerful themselves and greatly add to the gaiety of nations. I cannot forbear relating here, at the risk of being tedious, a small incident which happened when I was in South Africa, to exemplify the influence of certain attitudes upon the mood. I was lying ill in a hotel in a small up-country town when the Zulu rebellion was in progress. Among the refugees from the outlying districts were two small children who slept in the room opposite mine. I had ordered my door to be left open in order that I might have the company of passing creatures, and their door was open so that their parents might hear them from the dining-room. One night they began to play at being lions. First one little girl roared and then the other little girl roared, and then they both roared until presently a new note crept into the roar. They were roaring to such purpose and with such realism that presently they began to howl with terror. They had frightened themselves.

This mention of roaring leads me to observe that breathing should be inaudible. There is nothing

more distressing to an audience than the sound of the breath being sucked into the chest at certain definite intervals. This kind of breathing comes as a hideous form of punctuation. I remember being present in a tiny Wiltshire church at a service taken by an excellent gentleman who appeared to have a policeman's whistle in his nose and every time he took a breath the whistle—whistled. Indecent laughter was overcome with anguish. A more common form of loud breathing is that in which the vocal chords are allowed to come sufficiently close together to produce a slight rustling sound. The addition of a noise like that of a broken-winded horse to reading aloud is found to be distracting. It always reminds me of the story, told by a public entertainer, of the man who stammered so much that he was unable to propose to the lady of his choice. An elocutionist advised him to whistle before beginning to say each word. Pan's Pipes could not have been in it. The rustling or wheezing is caused by the tightening of the muscles about the throat, so that the vocal chords are forced into unnatural positions. The reader must watch for any sign of effort, of muscular effort, in or about the larynx and must practise again and again with an open throat until all sign of this effort disappears.

It is also essential that we should take breath frequently and whenever possible without drawing attention to the fact. The lungs should never be allowed to become even nearly empty. But in addition to this we should practise letting the breath out as slowly as possible. This may be done

by singing or humming a musical note with a watch in our hands to see how long we can keep going without taking a fresh breath. Little by little but very gradually we should strive to increase the length of time over which we can hold a note. Then we should practise letting the air out slowly while reading from a book. To many people it will be impossible to take breath through the nose while reading. But as a general rule nose breathing is infinitely better than mouth breathing.

It is unnatural to attempt to fill the lungs by raising the shoulders or by expanding the upper part of the chest only. The only normal and healthy way of breathing is nearly invisible, that is, that it is difficult for the observer to detect the movements which accompany it. Under the lungs and above the stomach (the language is unscientific but will serve) is a powerful muscle called the diaphragm. When this muscle is expanding the lungs, which it controls, it is almost straight. When it contracts them, by drawing in the sides of the chest, it is shaped like an inverted v, going up to a point in the middle. This movement up and down should not throw in and out the abdomen. Readers should practice *in puris naturalibus* before a looking glass until the abdominal movement is scarcely perceptible.

It is to be hoped that readers of this book will never have to cope with acoustic difficulties resulting from a bad room or from the noise of traffic. But if such difficulties occur they will never be overcome by shouting or very loud speaking. The

throat will be tired without adding to the audibility, that is the transmission of the whole of the sentence and of its parts to the listener. It is best in these circumstances to lower the tone of the voice, rather than to raise it, to speak more softly rather than to speak more loudly, to articulate more carefully than ever. Moreover, the mere sound of a loud voice, shouting, is either irritating or ridiculous. It was once my fate to enter upon business one of those curious barracks which a benevolent government used to erect for elementary schools. Several different departments are packed one on top of the other and a narrow, steep staircase leads from one tier to another. I was met by a blast of sound resembling that of a general election in a thunderstorm. One of the teachers on the top floor was speaking. His voice rushed down the staircase, gathering strength, so it seemed, as it went, a torrent of sound rushing forth into the playground and mingling with the roar of the traffic. I was not surprised when I reached his room to find that the children were in a state of wild disorder. If a speaker is worth listening to, the very lowering of the voice will be sufficient to make the listeners more quiet and more attentive. They will, indeed, hang upon his lips, being helped to some extent by their movements to understand what is being said.

It will be remembered that I pointed out in a previous chapter how the inside of any hollow object had a peculiar resonance of its own. So each room or hall has its own resonance. That is to say it will adapt itself to some sounds rather than to others.

We should experiment by trying to throw our voice as it were into different parts of the room until at last we are sure that every listener can hear, without undue effort on our part. We should, if I may put it so, listen to hear our voices coming back to us again. Or we should imagine ourselves to be sitting by the side of the listener. I have found it useful to speak to a point immediately in front of me about three-quarters of the way up the wall. It is indeed most necessary that we should keep our mouth above our books and that we should never lower the head while speaking. If we think of the stream of sound coming out of our mouths as if it were a stream of water it will be easy to understand that if we lower our heads our words will strike the chests of the first row of listeners, the middles of the second row, the knees of the third row, the feet of the fourth row, and will not reach the rows beyond at all.

I can hear protesting readers ask whether, according to this chapter, we are to sit when reading (or stand) as stiff as an Indian god, with our shins at right angles to our thighs, our thighs at right angles to the body, and the body at right angles to the chin. This, of course, is absurd. Such rigidity would in fact communicate itself to the muscles of the chest and throat and produce fatigue. We should take up an easy and comfortable position, changing it from time to time. Common sense in these matters is better than dogma, and if we remember this essential fact, that it is our diaphragm which actuates the lungs, that the lungs produce the

breathing, and the breath passing through our throats produces the speech sounds, it will rest with each of us to make sure that the diaphragm is not being compressed, nor the lungs constricted, nor the larynx strained or distorted. I do not venture to suggest any specific exercises for strengthening the vibration of the vocal chords. I disclaim altogether any pretension to a knowledge of voice production, as expounded by elocutionists, but I may be allowed to say that in spite of serious respiratory disturbances I can fill a large hall with my voice without undue fatigue, and that I have never had a lesson from a voice producer in my life. But I observed the general rules which I have set forth above.

CHAPTER V

It is possible that a halting, stammering, stuttering, stumbling delivery of verse and prose may still give pleasure to the reader. His mind supplies a perfected version of his reading. He believes that he is reading well. For our minds are gay deceivers. They will lead each of us to the mirror and show us an Adonis or a Venus, and in the privacy of the bathroom, when morning and water makes us vocal, we shall believe that our voices are like the voice of Apollo on Olympus. But the unfortunate listener is seldom under an illusion unless Cupid has been at his tricks. Each stumble, each stammer, each mistake rises up like a boulder in the path of his understanding. A halting delivery, a slaughter of consonant or sense is mere torture to him. He will either be hopelessly bored or irritated to desperation. How many friendships, one may wonder, have been broken by the perversity of a stumbling reader?

For this technical deficiency there is but one cure. We must practise to make the eye travel ahead of the voice. We must recognize and learn the words before they must be sounded. No doubt an experienced reader will need little or no practice to succeed in giving an accurate and fairly intelligent

rendering of the text, but he owes his facility to old habits and insensibly his eye is travelling ahead, registering the words, the stops, the sense so that his tongue may be prepared for any difficulties that occur. There is no need to labour this point. Fluency, that is a reasonable dispatch in saying clearly and without tripping-up the words as they come in a rational context, lies at the very base of all good reading. It is an insult to read aloud to others and stumble in our reading. We are putting our listeners in a false position. They are displeased but cannot condemn. We have brought them there on false purposes. In a republic of intellect they would be justified in slaying us forthwith.

To attain this reasonable fluency, by which I do not mean an oily and unsensitive outflow of sounds, but clear and unhalting reading with all the æsthetic attributes added, there is but one piece of advice we can give and that is to practise and practise again reading with the eye running ahead on the printed page. Exercises have been given in sufficient abundance and in sufficient variety to enable the student to make progress. But only by dealing faithfully with our lazy and reluctant selves can we achieve anything in the technique of reading. The indication, then, is to work.

CHAPTER VI

THE reader is, with the exception of gesture and movement, like an actor. He stands, as it were, upon a stage. His audience is at a little distance from him. This space between the reader and the listener must never be forgotten. But there is more than a mere measurable space. For what are the processes that take place when we read aloud to others? First our eye registers what is to be read, then our brain commands our tongue to utter the words in appropriate form. Then the sounds as we produce them are transmitted to the ears of the listener, and thus to his understanding. But we must make allowance for the slight delay in transmission and give the listener time to recompose in what I may call sense-units the sounds that we have uttered.

Of what is language composed? You will say words, the phonetician answers "sounds." But in effect it is neither of sounds nor of words, but of meanings. And just as to the word several sounds go, so to the meaning several words go. We believe the wee child is beginning to speak when it says "Down." But the fact is, not merely *down* is meant but some such intention as "I want to get

down," or "Put it down," or "Put me down." The idea has formed itself as a whole in the child's slowly developing mind, and it has grasped at the significant word in that sense-unit, the word "Down" in this case. Analyse your own speech, and you will find that with your intimates you make all sorts of abbreviations, while with a stranger or one not intimate you will say the same thing in full, without shortening at all. We think in ideas or meanings, we express these meanings by groups of words, not by single words. Listen to friends speaking and you will find that when they come to the end of the words which compose a meaning-unit they make a light pause. That is a kind of natural comma or stop to divide one meaning unit from the other. Now when we read we should do exactly and precisely the same thing. The PAUSE is an essential in good reading. It enables the listener to reconstruct the words he has heard into meaning-units or sense-units. "I will go," is a sense-unit. "I will go quickly," is another. "I will go quickly to him," is another. "I will go quickly to him at Reading," is another. But "I will go quickly to him at Reading so that he may hear the news from me," is not one but two sense-units. A slight pause between the words "Reading" and "so" will make the sense much clearer to the listener.

The pause, then, while giving the listener just that space of time which will enable him to grasp the group of interconnected words as a whole, divides meaning from meaning-unit. But it does much more. Framing, as it were, each sense group,

the pauses are essential to the rhythm of fine prose. Poetry, of course, by its very construction and division into lines, safeguards its rhythm to a great extent. But even in poetry the rhythm is not merely formed by lines of a certain length or of varying lengths, but depends on the pauses within the line. Rhythm in writing I will describe as a sinuous line in the rise and fall and in the stresses of the voice. This sinuous curving of the tones and the stressing give not only a musical effect but an intellectual effect. Through our senses it appeals to our reason. We understand the writer's meaning better because of it. The pause acts an interpreter. Where should we pause? I cannot do better than repeat the words of Mr. Burrell, who has written a well-known book on reading, that we should pause at the end of every completed picture. As I have purposely avoided reading his book again—it is three years since I read it—I cannot remember whether he amplifies this admirable rule. It needs amplifying. For we might put too narrow a construction on it and think that the pause was necessary only at the end of every picture of something concrete, thus: "At Flores (picture of a place) in the Azores (another picture of a place)," or "At Flores in the Azores (pause) Sir Richard Grenville lay (picture of Sir Richard G.)." But we must also pause at the end of every completed intellectual picture. It is better to say, pause at the end of every completed meaning. It is when we come to the pause that we see the necessity for adequate preparation before reading aloud so as to give pleasure to others. Let us take

one or two pieces of fine prose by different writers and see to what this study of the pause will lead us.

First let Carlyle speak. I open a book at venture and by a pleasant coincidence find this ready to my hand :—

“ I said, Dante’s Poem was a Song : it is Tieck who calls it a mystic unfathomable song ; and such is literally the character of it. Coleridge remarks very pertinently somewhere, that wherever you find a sentence musically worded, of true rhythm and melody in the words, there is something deep and good in the meaning too. For body and soul, word and idea, go strangely together here as everywhere. Song : we said before, it was the Heroic of speech ! All *old*, Homer’s and the rest, are authentically Songs. I would say, in strictness, that all right poems are ; that whatsoever is not *sung* is properly no Poem, but a piece of Prose cramped into jingling lines, to the great injury of the grammar, to the great grief of the reader, for the most part.”

Where shall we pause in the above extract ? Let us mark the pauses by a —. Of course we must pause at Carlyle’s own commas and stops. But we may find it necessary to make slight pauses elsewhere, and let us remember that a pause is only a lingering in time, not a dead stop. If a pause meant a dead stop, the effect of pausing would be to make our delivery jerky. We begin, then :

“ I said—Dante’s poem was a song—it is Tieck who calls it a mystic—unfathomable song—and such is literally the character of it. Coleridge remarks very pertinently somewhere—that wherever you

find a sentence musically worded—of true rhythm and melody in the words—there is something deep—and good—in the meaning too. For body and soul—word and idea—go strangely together—here as elsewhere—Song—we said before—it was the Heroic of speech—all old—Homer's and the rest—are authentically songs—I would say in strictness—that all right poems are—that whatsoever is not sung—is properly no Poem—but a piece of Prose cramped into jingling lines—to the great injury of the grammar—to the great grief of the reader—for the most part.”

It will be seen that the pauses I have marked are practically all shown by Carlyle's punctuation. But here and there I have placed pause marks where there is no comma or punctuation stop. Thus: between good and in. Do you agree with my marking of pauses? If not, why not? On the whole Carlyle marks his pauses himself. The style is that of a man who writes as he speaks aloud, who hears his own oratorical delivery. But other writers do not make so free a use of stops. We must see that our pauses render the meaning clear without making the reading jerky.

I take at venture from the admirable preface to the Oxford Book of French Verse the following sentences :—

“It has been said that the continued eagerness shown by the French temperament to impose the restraint of authority on its art is produced by the distrust of its own exuberance. The ‘reform’ which is usually attributed to Malherbe was probably carried

into effect for another and less subtle reason ; it was due to a social movement in some degree analogous to the moral reaction which we spoke of a moment ago. Poetry became domesticated and went to live at the Hôtel Rambouillet."

The only punctuation stops are after "exuberance," "reason," "ago," and, of course, "Rambouillet." But the listener would have some difficulty in understanding if the reader limited himself to those stops. I suggest that the following additional pauses will make the sense clearer and bring out the rhythm of the style.

A pause after "said." A pause after "temperament." A pause after "art." A pause after "reform," after "Malherbe," after "movement," after "analogous," and a slight pause after "reaction." A pause after "domesticated." I do not suggest that all these pauses should be of the same length.

Let us take another passage, also written by an Oxford man. It is the beginning of an introduction.

"From no part of the mission field has the student of education more to learn than from the experience of those devoted men and women who are labouring for the well-being of the native populations in different parts of Africa. Nowhere has experience more conclusively shown that the essential thing in education is the personality of the teacher."

The only stops are after "Africa" and "teacher." I suggest the following additional pauses : after

"field," "learn," "women," "populations," "Nowhere," "shown," "education." Compared with these suspension pauses, the full stops of punctuation really are stops, of complete arrest.

So far I have laid stress on the necessity for pauses as an aid to the comprehension of the listener. But the pause has another effect. Read out the three passages I have given and notice the length of the syllable just before the suspension pauses as I give them. You will find that either the last or the penultimate syllable is longer; the suspension pause is in effect caused by the lingering of the voice on one or other of the preceding syllables. But the pause does far more than this, it detaches phrase from phrase, we feel better ourselves and convey better to our listeners the rhythm of each sense-group. This rhythm exists in prose as well as in verse, but prose rhythm is different from the rhythm of verse. To the best of my belief the secrets of prose rhythm have not yet been reduced to a system, but the number of syllables, the number of stressed and unstressed syllables and the relative positions of the stresses in each sense-group all contribute to the harmony of the whole. One author will depend largely on comparatively short groups, another on long groups, another on rapid variations from long to short and short to long, another will gradually work up from short groups to a long, sonorous group at the end of his sentence or period, another will terminate a series of groups of about ten or fifteen syllables by a short group of monosyllables. The choice of group-lengths is, I think, unconscious and

consequently represents something instinctive in the writer. It is his inner rhythm expressing itself in prose. The more sensitive, vibrant author of a high degree of emotivity and responsiveness to outer and inner stimuli will probably have the most varied, and the most pleasingly varied, sense-groups. I have tried to reduce these rhythms to a set of mathematical curves. The effort was fascinating but fruitless. At best, I found that some authors had a preference for certain numbers of syllables and avoided others altogether, but there are elements in rhythm which escape me. I think that the word-picture affects our percept of the sound, but I cannot reduce my investigation to a formula. Reading aloud, however, makes a deep, temporary impression of the author's rhythms on the brain. I know of one critic who falls rather too easily into a pseudo-Stevensonian style, another who unconsciously has aped Meredith, and a writer who has at times come perilously close to the rush of Mr. H. G. Wells' phrases. A modern caricaturist has recently produced a set of intentional imitations of contemporary authors which were scarcely to be distinguished from the originals. And when I have been reading Meredith for some hours I find my brain ticking clock-wise, to the tune of his phrases. I thrum inwardly, beating words like drum-notes, myself enslaved by the master, suppressing individuality and writing libretto for another's music.

Let it be remembered, however, that the rhythmic patterns of prose are not contained by each sense-group, but in the whole sentence, often the whole

paragraph. Verse has a rhythm of each line, a rhythm of each stanza, a rhythm of the whole. This last is practically only noticeable in short poems.

But the pause has another use. Let us take the following verse of a little poem I will quote in full later on.

“ I can hear the light laughter of little waves leaping,
And the deep, joyous laughter of great waves that
boom,
And above them the white gulls are gladsomely
sweeping,
And the children are splashing where white surf is
creeping,
And over the hills there’s a town and a tomb
And a dear friend sleeping.”

In the last line as I read it there is a pause between friend and sleeping. What is the effect of that pause there? Is it merely that of dividing one sense-group from another? Surely not. It would be excellent sense to read—

“ And a dear friend sleeping.”

without any pause. The effect, it seems to me, is to cut the word “ sleeping ” away from the rest of the meaning, to put it in relief, to draw attention to it, to underline it, to bring out its full significance. For here “ sleeping ” means “ dead.”

Sometimes the author will guard himself against bad reading by putting in the suspension pause for himself. Thus, Goldsmith :—

“ When lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away ?

“ The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom, is—to die.”

Lamb has made a copious use of pauses in his Essay on Roast Pig :—

“ While he was thinking what he should say to his father, and wringing his hands over the smoking remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an odour assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from?—not from the burnt cottage—he had smelt that smell before—indeed this was by no means the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young fire-brand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burnt his fingers, and to cool them, he applied them in booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crumbs of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world’s life indeed, for before him no man had known it) he tasted—*crackling*.”

This last pause is, of course, an example of the underlining or relief pause. Lamb has set the word “ crackling ” in italics as well. He need not

have done so. The pause mark was sufficient. R. L. Stevenson in certain dramatic passages uses the pause to place a word in relief. Thus in *Olalla* :—

“ In my own room, I opened the window and looked out, and could not think what change had come upon that austere field of mountains that it should thus sing and shine under the lofty heaven. I had seen her—*Olalla*.”

Or he uses it elsewhere to draw attention to the special significance of a word :—

“ It was his mind that puzzled, and yet attracted me. The doctor’s phrase—an innocent—came back to me.”

One last prose example, from Mr. H. G. Wells’ *Door in the Wall* :—

“ Let me tell you something, Redmond. This loss is destroying me. For two months, for ten weeks nearly now, I have done no work at all, except the most necessary and urgent duties. My soul is full of unappeasable regrets. At nights—when it is less likely I shall be recognised—I go out. I wander. Yes. I wonder what people would think of that if they knew. A Cabinet Minister, the responsible head of that most vital of all departments, wandering alone—grieving—sometimes near audibly lamenting—for a door, for a garden.”

There are, however, many thousands of cases where the author has not punctuated to show such a pause. Perhaps that is mostly the case in poetry. It is the business of the reader in giving his own

interpretation, to underline or set words out in relief by the proper use of this kind of pause.

The pause also is often a key to a doubtful meaning. Here is an example. Some time ago I was in the rooms of an English colleague. He was editing a little book on Browning, and had found a minor difficulty in the *Grammarians' Funeral*. I quote the lines with their context.

“ Oh, such a life as he resolved to live,
When he had learned it,
When he had gathered all books had to give ;
Sooner, he spurned it ! ”

The point was the meaning of *sooner*. My English colleague turned to another lecturer in English and asked him what he made of it. The reply was that habit forbade any attempt to decipher meanings before lunch. Being curious and without shame I took up the book and read out the passage aloud. I observed the pause, a long pause, before the word *sooner* and the pause after it. At once I saw that the meaning was “ Until I have mastered learning's crabbed text I will spurn actual life.” I am glad to note, now that the little Browning is published, that this explanation commended itself to my friend. He has given it in substance in his notes to the poem. The simple observation of a pause did for me what considerable familiarity with Browning had not done for him.

Here is an interesting use of pauses. In Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* I find this note on Wordsworth's Sonnet “ To Sleep.” “ The distribution of

pauses in this sonnet is worth studying. The effect is very subtle." Study that effect. What is it? Here is the sonnet :—

TO SLEEP.

" A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by
One after one ; the sound of rain, and bees
Murmuring ; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky :
I've thought of all by turns, and yet do lie
Sleepless ; and soon the small birds' melodies
Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees,
And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.

" Even thus last night, and two nights more I lay,
And could not win thee, Sleep ! by any stealth :
So do not let me wear to-night away :

" Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth ?
Come, blessed barrier between day and day,
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health ! "

Palgrave suggests that we should compare this sonnet with other poems on sleep, and gives one or two quotations. Let us follow his advice, and in the poems quoted below study the effects of all the pauses. Later when we have read the chapters dealing with stress and intonation it will be worth while to come back and read all these verses aloud after studying them from all points of view. It will be an excellent exposition of the value of reading aloud as a method of critical comparison and as an aid to appreciation. Sir Philip Sidney's sonnet is an old favourite. I give it precedence here.

Readers of Lamb will remember that he quotes it in his essay on Sidney.

“ Come, sleep ! O sleep, the certain knot of peace,
 The baiting place of wit, the balm of woe,
 The poor man’s wealth, the prisoner’s release,
 Th’ indifferent judge between the high and low ;
 With shield of proof shield me from out the prease
 Of those fierce darts despair at me doth throw :
 O make in me those civil wars to cease,
 I will good tribute pay if thou do so.
 Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
 A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,
 A rosy garland and a weary head :
 And if these things as being thine by right,
 Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me
 Livelier than elsewhere Stella’s image see.”

I should like to have quoted James Thomson’s
 “ Insomnia,” but it is far too long ; these few lines,
 however, will give a taste of its quality if not of
 its trend :—

“ I heard the sounding of the midnight hour ;
 The others one by one had left the room,
 In calm assurance that the gracious power
 Of sleep’s fine alchemy would bless the gloom,
 Transmuting all its leaden weights to gold. . . .”

Now let Beaumont and Fletcher speak :—

“ Come, sleep, and with thy sweet deceiving,
 Lock me in delight awhile ;
 Let some pleasing dreams beguile

All my fancies ; that from thence
I may feel an influence,
All my powers of care bereaving."

" Though but a shadow, but a sliding,
Let me know some little joy.
We that suffer long annoy
Are contented with a thought,
Through an idle fancy wrought :
Oh, let my joys have some abiding."

From Mr. W. T. Young's book, *The Poetry of the Age of Shakespeare*, I take a poem which he found in Dowland's Third Book of Songs or Airs. It is by an anonymous author :—

" Weep you no more, sad fountains,
What need you flow so fast ?
Look how the snowy mountains
Heaven's sun doth gently waste.
But my sun's heavenly eyes
View not your weeping,
That now lies sleeping
Softly ; now softly lies
Sleeping.

" Sleep is a reconciling,
A rest that peace begets.
Doth not the sun rise smiling
When fair at e'en he sets ?
Rest you, then rest, sad eyes,
Melt not in weeping ;
While She lies sleeping
Softly ; now softly lies
Sleeping."

Again from Mr. Young's admirable book, this,
by J. Fletcher—

“Care charming sleep, thou easer of all woes,
Brother to death, sweetly thyself dispose
On this afflicted prince ; fall like a cloud
In gentle showers, give nothing that is loud,
Or painful to his slumbers ; easy, sweet,
And as a purling stream, thou son of night,
Pass by his troubled senses ; sing his pain
Like hollow murmuring wind, or silver rain.
Into this prince, gently, oh, gently, slide,
And kiss him into slumbers like a bride.”

The opening of the last verses calls for comparison
with Daniel's sonnet—

“Care-charmer Sleep, son of the sable Night,
Brother to Death in silent darkness born,
Relieve my languish and restore the light,
With dark forgetting of my cares return,
And let the day be time enough to mourn
The ship-wreck of my ill-adventured youth :
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,
Without the torment of the night's untruth.
Cease, dreams, the imagery of our day-desires,
To model forth the passions of the morrow ;
Never let the rising sun approve you liars,
To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow ;
Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain,
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.”

Next, Shakespeare. King Henry speaks (King
Henry IV., Part II., Act III., 1) :—

“ How many thousand of my poorest subjects
Are at this hour asleep ! O sleep ! O gentle sleep !
Nature’s soft nurse, how have I frighted thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,
And steep my senses in forgetfulness ?
Why rather, sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,
Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,
And hushed with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber,
Than in the perfumed chambers of the great,
Under the canopies of costly state,
And lulled with sounds of sweetest melody ?
O, thou dull god ! why liest thou with the vile
In loathsome beds and leav’st the kingly couch
A watch case or a common ’larum bell ?
Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
Seal up the ship-boy’s eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude imperious surge,
And in the visitation of the winds,
Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them
With deaf’ning clamours in the slippery clouds,
That, with the hurly, death itself awakes ?
Canst thou, O partial sleep, give thy repose
To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude ;
And in the calmest and most stillest night,
With all appliances and means to boot,
Deny it to a king ? Then, happy low, lie down !
Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.”

The late Mr. Andrew Lang who gave us, with Mr. Leaf and Mr. Butcher, that fine translation of Homer that reads almost like an original, wrote many charming ballades in his *Blue China*, and among them one on “ Sleep ” :—

BALLADE OF SLEEP.

“ The hours are passing slow,
 I hear their weary tread
 Clang from the tower, and go
 Back to their kinsfolk dead.
 Sleep ! death’s twin-brother dread !
 Why dost thou scorn me so ?
 The wind’s voice overhead
 Long wakeful here I know,
 And music from the steep
 Where waters fall and flow.
 Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep ?

“ All sounds that might bestow
 Rest on the fever’d bed,
 All slumb’rous sounds and low
 Are mingled here and wed,
 And bring no drowsied.
 Shy dreams flit to and fro
 With shadowy hair dispread ;
 With wistful eyes that glow,
 And silent robes that sweep.
 Thou wilt not hear me ; no ?
 Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep ?

“ What cause hast thou to show
 Of sacrifice unsped ?
 Of all thy slaves below
 I most have laboured
 With service sung and said ;
 Have cull’d such buds as blow,
 Soft poppies white and red,
 Where thy still gardens grow,
 And Lethe’s waters weep.
 Why, then, art thou my foe ?
 Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep ? ”

ENVOY

“ Prince, ere the dark be shred
By golden shafts, ere low
And long the shadows creep :
Lord of the wand of lead,
Soft-footed as the snow,
Wilt thou not hear me, Sleep ? ”

I will close this chapter with one more quotation,
from Keats' *Endymion*.

“ O magic sleep ! O comfortable bird,
That broodest o'er the troubled sea of the mind
Till it is hushed and smooth ! O unconfin'd
Restraint ! imprisoned liberty ! great key
To golden palaces, strange minstrelsy,
Fountains grotesque, new trees, bespangled caves,
Echoing grottoes, full of tumbling waves
And moonlight ; aye, to all the mazy world
Of silvery enchantment !—who, upfurl'd
Beneath thy drowsy wing a triple hour,
But renovates and lives ? ”

But no anthology of poems on Sleep would be complete without Mrs. Browning's poem, which is too long for quotation, but can be found easily elsewhere, “ He giveth His belovéd, Sleep.”

CHAPTER VII

AFTER the pause, the stress.

In every phrase there is one word of greater importance than any other. This word should be slightly accented, and the placing of the stress on the right word will affect the meaning of the whole. If I take the sentence, "I am going home to-day," and stress the word "I," the meaning will be that somebody else is not going home to-day. If I stress the word "am" the suggestion is that I go home in spite of what might have been thought to the contrary. If the word "going" is stressed the result is nonsense. If the stress is on the word "home" the meaning is that I am not going anywhere else. If the word "to-day" is stressed, the meaning is that I am not going home to-morrow or the day after or any other day, but to-day.

But this stressing and, with rare exceptions, all stressing should be extremely light. The reader must not come down on the word like a piano tuner picking out a note he suspects. The effect of over-stressing is ridiculous in the extreme. I remember an excellent example was given in a book on reciting which I read when I was at school. The lines chosen were those from the beginning of the "Death of Sir John Moore."

"Not a *drum* was heard."

Stress *drum* too much and the meaning is, but a trumpet or a bassoon or some other instrument.

“Not a *funeral* note.”

Stress *funeral* too much and the meaning is conveyed that it was a jovial note, and so on. The result of misplacing all the stresses in the poem was to turn it into a wild burlesque. Ordinary right stressing is usual in the speech of even the least educated people, but this is unfortunately not the case in reading. And right stressing in the phrase or sentence is more common than in the period or verse. In every paragraph or period or unit there is a word or a little group of words of considerable significance, that sheds a light upon the author's point of view, or on that of the speaker. This word or group of words must be slightly accented, slightly more accented than other stressed words in the piece we are reading aloud.

In Burke's great speech on Conciliation, after a lengthy introduction in which he sets forth the processes of mind that led him to his position at the time, he speaks the words—

“The proposition is peace.”

And as the whole of his point of view, his sympathies, his statesmanship are contained in those words, since all his arguments that follow are built to ensure the peace in which he believes, we must give these words an accent of their own. And besides this stress we should, I think, lower slightly the pitch of the voice, speak the words gravely, and above all

simply. But the sentence must be detached from all that precedes and from all that follows, detached both by a pause before and after and by the level stressing of every word and the special stressing of the whole. Observe the sentences which precede and follow: "To restore order and repose to an empire so great and so distracted as ours, is, merely in the attempt, an undertaking that would ennoble the flights of the highest genius, and obtain pardon for the efforts of the meanest understanding. Struggling a good while with these thoughts by degrees I felt myself more firm. I derived, at length, some confidence from what in other circumstances usually produces timidity. I grew less anxious, even from the idea of my own insignificance. For judging of what you are by what you ought to be I persuaded myself that you would not reject a reasonable proposition, because it had nothing but its reason to recommend it. On the other hand, being totally destitute of all shadow of influence, natural or adventitious, I was very sure that if my proposition were futile or dangerous; if it were weakly conceived, or improperly timed, there was nothing exterior to it, of power to awe, dazzle, or delude you. You will see it just as it is, and you will treat it just as it deserves.

*The proposition is peace.**

Not peace through the medium of war; not peace to be hunted through the labyrinth of intricate and

* The italics and setting-up are mine.—H. M. O'G.

endless negotiations; not peace to arise out of universal discord, fomented, from principle, in all parts of the empire, etc."

How short and simple is that sentence in relief, in the midst of the splendid periods on either side of it. The key to the whole speech lies in it, and I take it that the reader's tone throughout the whole speech should be one of perfect courtesy and good temper and conciliation with an undercurrent of noble and sincere passion—the passion for peace with our blood-kindred across the water.

In Tennyson's poem *Ulysses* the key-word is to be found in the first line,

"It little profits that an idle king . . ."

The word is *idle*. It is his idleness that palls on the Great Wanderer, that is driving him to "sail beyond the sunset, and the baths Of all the western stars," until he die. Again and again he recurs to that idea. "I cannot rest from travel," and "I am become a name," and "How dull it is to pause," and with this the whole of the latter part of the poem is strongly contrasted, leading up to the triumphant affirmation at the end, "We are . . . one equal temper of heroic hearts . . . strong in will To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

In Keats' *Ode to a Nightingale* the key-word is to be found at the very end of the penultimate verse and immediately at the beginning of the last verse. It is the word "forlorn." But the meaning of forlorn in the last verse is not quite the same as that in the preceding verse. In the penultimate

“forlorn” does not bear the full stress. In the next verse it does.

In Wordsworth’s *I wandered lonely as a cloud*, the word which overshines all is surely the word “dancing” and its variants. In Kingsley’s *Three fishers went sailing*, the refrain makes it very clear to us that the stressed word of the whole poem is “moaning.” In Mrs. Browning’s *The Sleep*, a poem I can never read aloud without the strongest and most cleansing emotion, I think the sentence that detaches itself a little from all else is “and childlike on His love repose,” although of course the refrain “He giveth His belovéd, sleep” by its very repetition stands out. But the “childlike on His love repose” contains the mastering sentiment of the poem. The word “childlike” points us to a great simplicity in rendering, the word “love” indicates the atmosphere of strong but restrained passion that should be about our reading, the word “repose” should be an indication to us to strive at the general effect of soothing consolation. So that our reading, taking its cue from that line, should be vibrant but simple and restrained with a very frequent use of the deep notes of the voice, grave and not louder than necessary to reach our audience.

In Shelley’s *The Cloud* the word of value is “change” . . . “I change.” Great variations in pitch, in tone, in pace, in loudness are required to render this poem so as to bring out its full effect. In Keats’ *Belle Dame sans Merci* the word to be stressed slightly more than the rest is “thrall” in

the line "Hath thee in thrall," so that we shall give to the whole poem a sensation of mental fear, of a mind imprisoned by an overpowering obsession.

Therefore in preparing a speech or a story or a poem to read aloud, we should first read it through carefully, looking the while for the word or phrase or sentence which seems to us to stand out as a symbol of the writer's point of view or prevailing idea. Of course there will be poems and speeches and stories in which there is no such symbolic word or phrase, but I am inclined to think that where they do not exist the construction of the piece is defective. When we have found the key-word or key-phrase we begin at the beginning again, taking each sentence in turn and asking ourselves which word requires slight stressing and if any require specially strong stressing. Let us examine the following little lyric by Shelley:—

"Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

"Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heap'd for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on."

What words shall we stress? In the first place is there a special word, or phrase, or line that is a key to the whole poem and requires slightly more stressing than the rest of the verse? I think the second line stands out a little, a very little more

than any other. The poem is about the remembering of dear, dead things and the words "vibrates in the memory" stand in closer relation to this idea than any other line excepting perhaps the last of the first verse. The poem is very short. It is in fact epigrammatic. It would be difficult to conceive of any shorter way of expressing the idea. First the three elements of memory are given in poetical similes, sound, scent and touch. Then the comparison is completed by being connected with the object of remembrance. The very brevity of the poem in this case makes it difficult to detach a key-word or phrase from the rest. But there are the stresses in each line to be considered. In the first line I stress the word "die," but only slightly. The second line I give with level stressing throughout. In the third line I stress slightly the word "sicken," and in the last line of verse (1) the word "live." My reason is that "die" and "sicken" are in direct contrast with the whole of the second line, and especially with the word "live" of the fourth. So in the next verse, I stress lightly the word "dead." In the second line I do not give special stress to any word, but in the third I stress both "thoughts" and "thou." I am doubtful about stressing any word in the last line unless it be "Love." The whole poem is so delicately woven that any excessive stressing will ruin its tenuous and tender grace.

Sometimes stress will do what the pause does, set a word in relief to draw attention to its peculiar value. Thus we saw that Lamb both stressed the

word "crackling," and cut it from the rest of the sentence by a pause in front of it. On the whole I prefer a slight suspension pause for this purpose. Stressing should rather be used to bring out the meaning of a word in relation to the whole of the sentence. But we must never forget that while correct stressing is most essential to the proper understanding of a piece of prose or verse, it is a delicate task and calls for considerable judgment in the amount of weight that we give the voice when we are pronouncing the word. Wrong stressing and heavy stressing are both ridiculous.*

I wonder how many readers found a difficulty in bringing out the sense of line 3 in the speech from King Henry IV., Part II., given in the last chapter? I found my reading unsatisfactory until I looked for the stress word (which I had unaccountably neglected). So, too, with line 6. What are the stress words in those two lines and in what way do they affect the meaning? They are both examples of exceptions to the rule about heavy stressing. I feel they must, in order to bring out the full value of the verse, be heavily stressed.

* Exercises on stressing verse and prose will be found in the appendix.

CHAPTER VIII

WE come now to Reading Aloud as an instrument of literary appreciation. We have seen that in studying a poem to read aloud we should strive to speak as clearly as possible, using a system of English sounds as varied as possible so as to bring out the full beauty of the vocables composing the piece we read. There is no need to underline here the fact that in studying the sounds as mere sounds we shall already have begun to appreciate the beauty or the reverse of what we are about to read. Resonant sounds, nasals and open vowels in pleasing contrast or combination, will stimulate already our sensuous sense of pleasure. Next the close examination of the poem or prose extract in order to mark the pauses necessary to make it clear to the listener will break up our piece into its rhythmic units. We shall feel more intimately the rhythmic system of the whole. The marking of pauses before words of importance and the stressing of the words of special value in the sentence will concentrate our attention on the meaning of words and sentences. We shall have a much more intimate understanding of what we are reading. Paradoxically enough all this sensuous study, all this practice of mouth and lips,

this semi-mechanical business together with the thinking out of pauses and stresses actually increases our intellectual appreciation of what we are reading.

But so far we have only dealt with the details of a poem or a piece of prose, and we have not touched at all upon the use of the voice as a musical instrument. For our vocal chords are in effect musical instruments of the greatest delicacy and in some people of the greatest power. Consider how far reaches the call of the Australian signalling to his fellows or the musical cry of the Zulu sending on from hill-top to hill-top the message that so often outspeeds the telegraph. And think how low and soft the voice can become in moments of tenderness and emotion. The mechanism which effects these changes, which sends the music up and down the scale, increases the tension, softens or makes raucous, is one of the most delicate and sensitive creations of Nature. But we need not stop to examine what this mechanism is. It is sufficient that we should remember that a cord or a string or an elastic gives out a higher note when it is stretched than when it is lax. For practical purposes I suppose the least musical of readers can give out notes which are, broadly, of three kinds. First there is the normal pitch, the pitch at which the voice remains when speaking in ordinary conversation. Then there is a set of deep notes and another set of high notes. Some people have a greater compass than others, but most people have some variation in the pitch of their voices, otherwise their conversation would very

soon tire their listeners by its dreadful monotony. I know of one or two men with such voices. In one case the monotony is undoubtedly due to some affection of the throat. On the other hand, there are people who charm by the very intonations of their speech. We say quite correctly that their speech is musical. Their voices go from one end of a long scale to the other, leaping sometimes from a high note to a low note and vice versa, sometimes running through the intermediate notes. Now if these variations were divorced from the sense of what they were saying the result would be ridiculous. But where the variation runs parallel to the meaning of their words, the resulting charm is one of the most positive and at the same time most intangible things in the world of æsthetics. In speech this intonation and modulation is unconscious. But in reading aloud we shall profit by studying our intonations very carefully.

How do men express emotion by intonation? Normally they speak on a level pitch about the middle of the compass of their own voices. That middle note, or that little set of middle notes, is the starting point for us. What do we do when we are asking a question? Say the words "Are you coming?" Does the voice rise or fall in pitch? Now say the same words, "Are you coming," but without either raising or lowering the pitch. What is the effect on the meaning? Now say, "Are you coming?" starting the word "are" on a very high note and falling through the scale to a very low note for the word "coming." What is the effect on the

meaning? Now say the words again, starting on a high note for "are," dropping to a low note for "you," and rising to the same high note again for the word "coming." What is the effect? Take one or two of the deformations of pitch due to strong emotion. When we are very angry our muscles become tense. We are ready as it were for the spring at our victim. This tenseness communicates itself to the muscles of our throat and in most cases results in a tightening of the vocal chords. The voice rises in pitch. In fear the muscles are sometimes paralysed and either relax altogether ("our limbs are poured out like water"), with the result that a very deep, unresonant note is given out, or imitate the signs of anger and give out a very high, shrill note. Sorrow, roughly speaking, is rendered by lower notes, varying very little, or by a note low at first then rising a little as in a wail and falling, the whole being linked together without a break in the vibrations of the chords. Gaiety is shown by the lightness of the notes, by their tendency to rise to the upper register and by their variety.

We may divide the uses of intonation in reading into two main series. First, there is the ordinary use, the use of rise and fall to imitate the rises and falls of the human voice under the influence of natural emotions. Then there is the use of tone or pitch or force or speed or suavity or roughness or smoothness or unevenness to bring out the meaning of the author and to indicate ever so slightly the construction of the piece which is being read. And in examining the poem or story or prose extract

to see what intonations we shall apply we shall become aware of the construction, we shall realize more strongly the emotion of what we are reading, we shall have a closer and more sensitive understanding of the author's modes of expression.

Roughly, may it not be said that every written work of art may be divided into several parts? In some we have a definite introductory part, then a leading up to the climax or to a point intended by the writer, then a concluding part. In others we have two parts strongly contrasted. This is often the case in sonnets. In others we have a set of ideas without much *apparent* connection forming a first part and then, generally in a much more brief shape, we have a second part which ties together all these apparently unconnected elements and clinches the whole. I will make my meaning more clear by taking some examples.

Turn back to the poem by Shelley quoted in the last chapter. The first part (not verse) consists of three sets of similes, that of dying music leaving behind a memory, that of dying flowers leaving behind a memory, that of dead roses not dead to use since they are heaped for the beloved's bed. All these are of secondary importance in themselves. They serve merely to strengthen the idea contained in the second part, the last two lines, the undying memory of the woman loved. In reading this most difficult poem to read I make a distinct change in the pitch of my voice between the first part (lines 1-6) and the second. I lower the pitch considerably.

But we will come back to the "effects" later. Now I am anxious to bring out this framework or construction of the piece read. Does the following piece show any such framework?

" Three fishers went sailing out into the west,
Out into the west as the sun went down ;
Each thought on the woman who loved him best,
And the children stood watching them out of the town ;
For men must work, and women must weep,
And there's little to earn, and many to keep,
Tho' the harbour bar be moaning.

" Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower,
And they trimmed the lamps as the sun went down ;
They looked at the squall and they looked at the
shower,
And the night-rack came rolling up ragged and brown !
But men must work, and women must weep,
Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
And the harbour bar be moaning.

" Three corpses lay out on the shining sands
In the morning gleam as the tide went down,
And the women are weeping and wringing their hands
For those who will never come back to the town ;
For men must work and women must weep,
And the sooner it's over the sooner to sleep ;
And good-bye to the bar and its moaning."

Here Kingsley has made it easy for us. The first verse is introductory. It presents the characters, the fishers about to depart and the wives left behind. In the second verse we have the "action" of the piece, the storm and its dangers.

In the last verse is the conclusion of the matter, the death of the men who had gone forth. All these verses are subordinated to the general atmosphere of fatality emanating from the refrain, shown by the words "women must weep," and especially by the lines referring to the threatening and foreboding moaning of the bar, sure presage of storm.

Let us take now a poem by Poe.

" In the greenest of our valleys,
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion—
It stood there !
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair.

" Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On the roof did float and flow,
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago)
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A winged odour went away.

" Wanderers in that happy valley
Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically
To a lute's well-tuned law,
Round about a throne, where sitting
(Porphyrogene !)
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

“ And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

“ But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch’s high estate.
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him, desolate !)
And, round about his home, the glory
That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

“ And travellers now within that valley,
Through the red litten windows, see
Vast forms that move fantastically
To a discordant melody ;
While like a rapid ghastly river,
Through the pale door,
A hideous throng rush out for ever,
And laugh—but smile no more.”

Verses 1 to 4 form the first part, which is in violent contrast with the second part (verses 5 and 6). There is little or no transition from one to the other. The first two lines of verse 5 bring us straight to the change. There is an element of narrative and consequently there is a distinct introduction and a definite end. We may in passing

note the pauses which Poe has marked himself as a guide to the reader. They should be rather longer than the ordinary sense pauses. Without those in verses 1 and 2 the rhythm is ruined. The pause in the last line of the last verse is dramatic. It intensifies the meaning of the words—"and smile no more."

Here is a story which I am allowed to print in full. It appeared in a magazine whose death I for one deplore, *Rhythm*.

"THE LITTLE BOY.

"It was the Christmas week of a bitterly cold year. He was nearly six years old, and his head just touched the top of the standard when he went to fetch water in a big jug that he could hardly carry, for the pipes indoors were all frozen. The water as it slopped over the side of his jug on to the pavement froze grey as he watched it. The cold lasted for six weeks, and one night when Mother Thompson, the old woman who looked after him, lit the little green penny lamp in the room where he slept, it cracked suddenly just like a musical box he once heard play 'Linger longer, Lucy.' In those days he was always very unhappy, for the old woman was very cruel to him. All the day long he had to work on the floor with a great packer's needle, binding the ends of cheap rugs till he grew numb and dizzy, and he thought his fingers would break. One day an old man with a white beard and a note-book came to the door and looked at him. He said he was over age; and after that he used to go to the Board School most of the day. When playtime came he hid in the dark corners of the arches so that no one should see him;

and afterwards he ran home very fast, for the children frightened him. Besides, Mother Thompson would beat him if he was late for sewing the carpets. He seemed always very tired in those days. He was always very frightened. He walked, when he was sent on errands, only down the straight roads. Corners were terrible, and he had to run round them very fast for he always was afraid of some one coming to catch hold of him and beat him.

“ There were three corners on the way to the butcher’s, though the shop was not far away ; and he was always out of breath when he got there and when he reached home. One day in that cold Christmas week he walked round all the corners on his way home.

“ He had been sent for some meat, and the butcher had wrapped it up in a coloured page of a Christmas paper. It was a wonderful page. Red and yellow and green devils with pitchforks danced all over it. He walked very slowly home, unwrapping it so that he could read it all, until at last when he came to the green tubs in the doorway he was holding the meat in one hand and the paper in the other, still reading. The old woman beat him with a leather strap.

“ But he kept the coloured paper under a floor board, where he slept on a dirty piece of matting ; and he read it all that day when the old woman was out of sight. He did not understand it, but it was full of red and green and yellow devils.

“ That night he went to bed very happy. It was better than his cotton reels, and Mother Thompson had broken his only other treasure, a tiny gun, that was given him by an aunt who once came to see him. That night he was not frightened of the dark, when he blew out his piece of candle and went to sleep.

“ It was the very first night that he did not cry

quietly for Lily his doll. He had to cry very softly when he did cry, for *she* slept on the landing three stairs below. It used to make his throat sore, he tried so hard to stop. That night it did not hurt him to swallow, and he went to sleep quickly.

"He had a terrible dream. It was the worst that he had ever had. The red, green, and yellow devils were tormenting him and killing him. He woke up in the dark and the dark was full of them. He felt his way to the door. His heart was trying to break through his body, and his mouth was all dry. He crept down the three stairs on to the landing, and he felt about for the old woman's door. He knew that he would be beaten if he woke her, but he knew that there were green and yellow and red things behind him, and he could not stop. Somehow as he groped in the dark on the landing he missed the door and fell down the stairs. His heart raced as he cowered on the mat at the stairfoot for fear that she had heard him, and he lay there in the dark shivering and sick with fright until he was sure that she had not heard the noise. He had a wild idea that he would creep into her bed without waking her, and he began to walk up the stairs close to the banisters for that made them creak less.

"He could not walk at all. He had twisted his leg as he fell down the stairs and it hurt him terribly. He crawled very slowly up to the landing again and found the door ; pulled himself up on one leg to the handle and turned it as softly as he could. It was no use trying to get in without waking her, and yet he dared not rouse her. But he knew the red and green and yellow things were behind. So he stroked her face as it lay sideways on the pillow, because he thought she would not be angry with him if he waked her by stroking. His fingers trembled with cold and fear so that she woke very quickly.

“ ‘ Please may I come in your bed ? ’ His voice was choking with terror. He felt her eyes were angry in the dark. ‘ They’ll kill me.’

“ She hit him suddenly full in the face with the back of her hand, and his twisted leg was under him as he fell. He moaned for a minute on the floor. Then he was terribly afraid and he clawed his way up the side of the bed, clinging on to the valance. She hit him backward again. ‘ You little demon, I’ll tear your eyes out.’ He scrambled to the door. He did not even feel his leg until he tried to crawl down the stairs again. He dared not go back to his room. It was full of devils. He held his bad leg stiff and let himself down backwards, bumping slowly from stair to stair. His leg was agony to him. He thought he could see it in front of him like a white hot packing needle. He knew that he must go to the cellar and hide from the devils and the old woman ; and he wondered if he would die before he could get the cellar door shut. He managed to get it open by standing on one leg. As he swung it to the dusty rag-bag that hung behind it nearly knocked him down the cellar stairs. He clutched hold of it to save himself, and pulled the door open again. He slammed it and latched it in terror and crept down still more steps. He was only safe in the hole behind the cellar stairs. He curled up there and knew that he was going to die. He felt the mice and one big rat nosing about him. He could not scream. He fell asleep.” *

This is pure narrative. The first and introductory part ends at the discovery of the illustrated paper wrapped round the meat. The second part is the development of the child’s fear working to a

* John Middleton Murry in *Rhythm*, August, 1912.

climax when the old woman beats him off. After that we have a brief conclusion. We will see later how the use of the voice can bring out these constructional elements. This unfolding or division into contrasting parts, as the case may be, or, as in a great speech, the building up of successive arguments each of which leads a little farther to the main contention of the speaker, is inherent to all well constructed written works of art, but in reading aloud it is only possible to bring out this construction, to bring out the effect of such construction, when the piece to be read is of manageable length. We have at our disposal only a limited number of notes of the voice, that is of the instruments with which our effects can be produced. Roughly speaking, we strike a certain tone for each part and let that tone dominate as it were all the little variations necessary to bring out the details of that part of the piece. Let us go back to some of the pieces quoted in this chapter and in the last. We have seen that in Kingsley's poem there are three stages in the last voyage of the fishers. And in addition there is the refrain. This calls for four types of voice. It seems to me that in the first part of the first verse the voice should be near the tone of simple statement (I do not mean a conversational or colloquial tone), then as the refrain begins "For men must work . . ." the voice changes suddenly to a deeper, graver tone. We are here a kind of Greek chorus, commenting. In the first part of the second verse I do not go back to the tone of the first verse. There should be a note of menace. The refrain on the

other hand has much the same tone as in the first verse. In the last verse the tone of the verse and of the refrain are closely similar, for the gravity of the story leads naturally to a deeper and more solemn note.

In Mr. Murry's story the first and second part are easily distinguishable. The first part falls near to the ordinary, clear, simple tone of narrative. I think that here the tone may be more conversational than in the first part of the "Three Fishers," it will thus form a greater contrast to the next part. In this we have a tone as close as we can make it to one naturally expressing a growing fear, leading on and on, cumulatively, to the final climax (which, on second thoughts, I now place much farther down, at the words, "He could not scream") which is paroxysmal, paralysing, hoarse. And the last part, "He fell asleep," in order to bring out the contrast, should not only be cut off from the rest by a long pause, but should, so it seems to me, be spoken as simply and quietly as possible in an ordinary tone of voice.

One other example. In Poe's poem we should strive to give the first part in a light, pleasant tone, with just a touch of rapture that will render the love and beauty of the subject. The two lines that introduce the second part should, I think, have in their expression, some warning note of alteration. Finally, the last part should be spoken in a deeper tone altogether, becoming more menacing and more sad, with an undercurrent of fear until we change suddenly at the word "laugh," pause where Poe

has marked the pause, and give the words "smile no more" in a tone that renders to the full their meaning. What is that meaning?

I have dealt with these constructional parts of a poem or prose unit first because it seemed to me that I could make myself understood at once. The changes of tone required for so elementary a rendering of the structure, the development, the contrasting elements are within the reach of all who will try to use their voices for this purpose. But in point of fact, when I am myself preparing a piece to read aloud, I look for something else before I analyse the structure. In the chapter on stress, it will be remembered, I pointed out that there is a line or word or sentence in most pieces which is a key to the whole. Reading the poem, or whatever it is, rapidly through to ourselves we shall find that it leaves a general impression on us, an impression to some extent translated into words by that key-phrase or key-line. Very roughly we may say that the general impression is one of sadness or thankfulness or religious emotion or love of nature or indignation or irony or joy or gaiety or chaff or impending doom, and so on. We are in fact under the influence of the atmosphere of the poem or story. We must try to show that general atmosphere in the tone of our voice. We must begin on such a tone that some indication of the atmosphere of the whole is given at once, it may be a very slight indication where the beginning is in strong contrast to the end, or it may be a very evident indication. This tone will be a sort of dominant throughout the piece.

Let us now examine Keats' *Ode to a Nightingale* from this point of view. I will quote it in full :—

“ My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk :
 'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
 But being too happy in thy happiness,—
 That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
 In some melodious plot
 Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

2

“ O, for a draught of vintage ! that hath been
 Cool'd a long time in the deep-delved earth,
 Tasting of Flora and the country green,
 Dance and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth !
 O for a beaker full of the warm South,
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
 And purple-stained mouth ;
 That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
 And with thee fade away into the forest dim :

3

“ Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
 What thou among the leaves hast never known,
 The weariness, the fever and the fret
 Here where men sit and hear each other groan ;
 Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
 Where youth grows pale and spectre-thin, and dies ;
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-eyed despairs,
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
 Or new love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

4

“ Away ! away ! for I will fly to thee,
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy
 Though the dull brain perplexes and retards :
 Already with thee ! tender is the night,
 And haply the Queen-moon is on her throne,
 Cluster’d around by all her starry Fays ;
 But here there is no light,
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

5

“ I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
 But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild ;
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine ;
 Fast fading violets cover’d up in leaves ;
 And mid-May’s eldest child,
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

6

“ Darkling I listen ; and, for many a time
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,
 Call’d him soft names in many a mused rhyme
 To take into the air my quiet breath ;
 Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
 In such an ecstasy !
 Still would’st thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
 To thy high requiem become a sod.

7

"Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird !
 No hungry generations tread thee down ;
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard
 In ancient days by emperor and clown :
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn ;
 The same that oft-times hath
 Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

8

"Forlorn ! the very word is like a bell
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self !
 Adieu ! the fancy cannot cheat so well
 As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
 Adieu ! adieu ! thy plaintive anthem fades
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
 Up the hill-side ; and now 'tis buried deep
 In the next valley-glades :
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream ?
 Fled is that music : Do I wake or sleep ? "

What is the prevailing atmosphere of this wonderful poetry ? I have already said that I think the stress-word is "forlorn," and a solemn melancholy seems to me to be the dominant of the whole poem. From the first we must attempt to strike and maintain that note of solemn sadness, but, and it is here that one of the difficulties of good reading aloud comes in, the dominant tone must only be a sort of framework for the whole. Within it, under it, there will be the varying tones which show the development of the rhapsody, the minor

moods conjured up by the song of the nightingale, all working up to that splendid and sustained outpouring that ends with the word "forlorn." After that, as I read it, disillusionment, awakening, a return to the original tone and, as indicated by the poet's own pause mark, the end of the dream, the music, the symphony, and a rather hard, matter-of-fact note which jars with the rest of the poem. Professor Oliver Elton, however, makes the following comment on the poem, "At the end the dream is out and the music fled ; but meanwhile sorrow has disappeared under the power of the very imagination that works upon it." How far does your reading aloud bear out this note ? I will take down at venture from my bookcase a book of verse and quote at venture the nearest short poem to the page at which I open the book. I have taken down the volume entitled *The City of Dreadful Night*. It contains the poems of James Thomson, the Army schoolmaster, and the nearest short poem to the place at which I opened it is the "Mater Tenebrarum." Here it is :—

"MATER TENEBRARUM.

I.

" In the endless nights, from my bed, where sleepless in
anguish I lie,
I startle the stillness and gloom with a bitter and
strong cry :
O Love ! O Beloved long lost ! come down from thy
Heaven above,
For my heart is wasting and dying in uttermost famine
for love !

Come down for a moment ! oh, come ! Come serious
and mild
And pale as thou wert on this earth, thou adorable
Child !
Or come as thou art, with thy sanctitude, triumph, and
bliss,
For a garment of glory about thee, and give me one
kiss,
One tender and pitying look of thy tenderest
eyes,
One word of solemn assurance and truth that the soul
with its love never dies !

II.

“ In the endless nights, from my bed, where sleepless in
frenzy I lie,
I cleave through the crushing gloom with a bitter and
deadly cry :
Oh ! where have they taken my love from our Eden
of bliss on this earth,
Which now is a frozen waste of sepulchral and horrible
dearth ?
Have they killed her indeed ? is her soul as her body,
which long
Has mouldered away in the dust where the foul worms
throng ?
O'er what abhorrent Lethes, to what remotest
star,
Is she rapt away from my pursuit through cycles and
systems far ?
She is dead, she is utterly dead, for her life would hear
and speed
To the wild imploring cry of my heart that cries in its
dreadful need.

III.

“ In the endless nights, on my bed, where sleeplessly
brooding I lie,
I burden the heavy gloom with a bitter and weary
sigh :
No hope in this worn-out world, no hope beyond the
tomb ;
No living and loving God, but blind and stony Doom.
Anguish and grief and sin, terror, disease and despair :
Why throw not off this life, this garment of torture
I wear,
And go down to sleep in the grave in everlasting rest ?
What keeps me yet in this life, what spark in my
frozen breast ?
A fire of dread, a light of hope, kindled, O Love, by
thee ;
For thy pure and gentle and beautiful soul, it must
immortal be.”

Now what is the ground-tone of this poem ?
Is it not to be found in the lines :—

“ What keeps me yet in this life, what spark in my
frozen breast ?
A fire of dread, a light of hope, kindled, O Love,
by thee.”

At first I thought it was expressed by the words—

“ Anguish and grief and sin, terror, disease and
despair,”

but on further examination I felt that these only
expressed a part of the underlying emotions, which
are of mingled Doubt and Hope. In any case the

sentiment of the poem is the reverse of gay, it is vibrant with the sadness expressed in de Quincey's "Levana and our Ladies of Sorrow":—

" But the third sister, who is also the youngest —— ! Hush, whisper whilst we talk of *her* ! Her kingdom is not large, or else no flesh should live ; but within that kingdom all power is hers. Her head, turreted like that of Cybele, rises almost beyond the reach of sight. She droops not ; and her eyes rising so high *might* be hidden by distance ; but, being what they are, they cannot be hidden ; through the treble veil of crape which she wears, the fierce light of a blazing misery, that rests not for matins or vespers, for noon of day or noon of night, for ebbing or for flowing tide, may be read from the very ground. She is the defier of God. She is also the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of suicides. Deep lie the roots of her power ; but narrow is the nation that she rules. For she can approach only those in whom a profound nature has been upheaved by central convulsions ; in whom the heart trembles, and the brain rocks under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within. . . . And *her* name is Mater Tenebrarum—Our Lady of Darkness."

But with the despair there is mingled Hope, and it is for the reader to try over his notes and his tones until he can read this poem first with the overshadowing note of Doom and within this with a tone, where it is required, more hopeful, passionate still but vibrant with something akin to religious emotion. For the great atheist is a man seeking after religion.

Still considering this question of ground tones or atmospheric tone, I turn to Francis Thompson, the Catholic and mystic, and take from a little volume of verse this :—

“ IN NO STRANGE LAND.

“ ‘ *The Kingdom of God is within you.*’

“ O world invisible, we view thee,
O world intangible, we touch thee,
O world unknowable, we know thee,
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee !

“ Does the fish soar to find the ocean,
The eagle plunge to find the air—
That we ask of the stars in motion
If they have rumour of thee there ?

“ Not where the wheeling systems darken,
And our benumbed conceiving soars !—
The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors.

“ The angels keep their ancient places ;—
Turn but a stone, and start a wing !
'Tis ye, 'tis your estrangèd faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing.

“ But (when so sad thou canst not sadder)
Cry ;—and upon thy so sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross.

“ Yea, in the night, my Soul, my daughter,
Cry,—clinging Heaven by the hems ;
And lo, Christ walking on the water
Not of Genesareth, but Thames !”

Of this poem, Mr. Wilfrid Meynell, to whose eternal honour be it stated that he rescued a suffering fellow-creature and a fellow "literary man" from ruin, says, "In these triumphing stanzas, we hold in retrospect, as did he, those days and nights of human dereliction he spent beside London's River, and in the shadow—but all radiance to him—of Charing Cross."

I admit that I find it difficult to pick out any special word or line that gives an index to the whole, for in this case the whole of the short poem goes to the making of the ecstasy of belief. It is, indeed, overshadowed by a kind of radiance and the word "shine" in the last verse but one is nearest to expressing the atmosphere. But this is not the word of special stress. I think there are two sets of lines that require special stressing to cut them slightly from the rest. They are—

" Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder
Pitched betwixt Heaven and Charing Cross."

and—

" And lo, Christ walking on the water
Not of Genesareth, but Thames ! "

Both express in different words the belief that the Kingdom of God is within us. Personally I regret that the poet should have thought it necessary to have placed the words of the text at the head of the poem, as the poem was quite clear and strong enough to express that meaning by itself. However, to go back to the question of ground-tone, it

seems to me that we should strive to say this poem with a dominant of ecstatic emotion, yet simply. But in addition to this ground-tone there are other things to be expressed, as especially, in the two sets of lines I quoted as having special significance, something of whimsicality of the contrast of Heaven and Charing Cross, a charming whimsicality which I venture to think is often to be found in courageously religious people, for a delicate humour is one of the essences of Love. In the last two lines the delicacy of the sentiment remains but the contrast has lost its power to surprise, for we have had the contrast of Heaven and Charing Cross already, and there is added something more of the radiance of which I spoke, for the vision of Christ walking on the water must even to the unbeliever who regards it as a fable, have in it something of the transcendent. To the believer it is not necessary to point out this beauty.

I should like to multiply examples, to take at least one example of every kind of emotion that a poet can sing or a prose-writer express, but there are obvious reasons why this cannot be. We can, however, without quoting new pieces, refer to those we have already examined for other purposes. The dominant note of the story, "The Little Boy," is, I think, one of compassionate irony with a strong secondary element of fear. The dominant of Shelley's verses is a mingled note of regret and love. The general atmosphere of the "Three Fishers," one of bitterness at the cruelty of life. In the poem by Poe the end, I think, overshadows the beginning,

and the dominant is of fear, but not the fear of "The Little Boy," rather the fear of the intangible horror of lunacy. In Shakespeare's lyrics contrasting summer and winter the tone is one of delicate mockery. And so, as we read rapidly through every story or poem that is worth anything at all, we shall find a dominant, sometimes "laid on," as they say, "with a tar-brush," sometimes moderately noticeable, sometimes delicate, sometimes elusive. The more delicate or elusive it is, the more difficult will it be to render. For it is most difficult to suggest and insinuate, and the greatest practice is required to make the voice sufficiently light and pliable and obedient to our tiniest mental orders. Let us summarize, then, this question of tones and intonations. First, every poem has a prevailing atmosphere, and we must seek for the tone in which to *speak* this atmosphere. Next, every piece has certain structural parts, of development or of contrast, and under and within the prevailing atmosphere we must use other tones to bring out this development or contrast. Lastly, every sentence and word has its note. We will examine this in the next chapter.

But I think my readers will admit that even the examination to which we have subjected the pieces quoted, for the purpose of arriving at a ground-tone and "structural tones," has given them a greater understanding of those pieces.

CHAPTER IX

“ MINE eye, mine ear, my will, my wit, my heart,
Did see, did hear, did like, discern, did love,
Her face, her speech, her fashion, judgment, art,
Which did charme, please, delight, confound and move.
Then fancy, humour, love, conceit and thought,
Did so draw, force, intice, persuade, devise,
That she was won, moved, carried, compassed, wrought,
To think me kind, true, comely, valiant, wise,
That heaven, earth, hell, my folly and her pride,
Did work, contrive, labour, conspire and swear,
To make me scorned, vile, cast off, base, defied,
With her my love, my light, my life, my dear.
So that my heart, my will, my ear and eye
Doth grieve, lament, sorrow, despair, and die.”

This sonnet is taken—not at random—from Mr. W. T. Young's *Poetry of the Age of Shakespeare*. It is by Sir J. Davies. It is evident that I have chosen it for the number of pauses, for its structure, for its stresses and, having regard to the subject of this chapter, for the various word-intonations of which there are a great number. Before going on to what I have to say about it the reader will find it worth while to study for himself what he thinks all these

word-intonations are, and whether he agrees with me when I speak of a *number* of such intonations. While he is reading it I, too, will study it, and here is the result of my cogitations.

I find it difficult in studying the detail of a piece to dissociate intonation from pace, and from force. That is to say, I find myself considering not only how my voice must rise or fall but also whether I must keep a level pace or go faster or slow down, and also whether I must speak evenly or more loudly or more softly or go gradually from soft to loud and so on. In this sonnet the separate nouns, concrete or abstract, and the verbs and epithets, in order that they should not merely be a sort of dictionary enumeration, call for slight differences in intonation to contrast one with the next in order. In the first three lines, except for the word "love" in the second line, there is no word which carries what I venture to call a "congenital" intonation. The word "love" we may speak with some passion, but not too much, else we shall jar with the intonation of the whole. What is that dominant-intonation? Surely, there is in it some spirit of humour, of whimsicality, of mockery at the author's self. The poem is a conceit—"fancy, humour, love, conceit and thought," mingled together in their proper Elizabethan proportions. ("Tell me where is fancy bred, or in the heart or in the head?") So none of our intonations must be anything but light and delicate. In the first three lines, then, except for the word "love," what intonations shall we give to each of the words? Beginning on the middle

tone of the voice, it does not seem to me to matter much whether we drop half a tone or rise half a tone to the next word, "ear." Then back to the middle tone and another differentiation of a half-tone and so on, being careful, however, not to make the ups and downs monotonously regular. Thus, I rise a couple of tones to the word "wit." Indeed I think we may to some slight extent make the voice sing, that is, vary so as to bring out any charm we may feel in these contrasts.

The fourth line holds more of charm and more of delicate love. A trifle more of passion may be introduced. Personally, I use the lower tones of my voice in reading this line. In the fifth line I give two notes to "fancy," a low note rising to a tone three or so higher. And so for "humour" and "conceit." There is passion in the next line, but do not forget the dominant of the whole. Do not mount your Pegasus. *Ne vous emballez pas.* Don't run away, as the French put it. In the next line there is triumph and in the next a shade, just the least little shade in the world, of mockery.

After that we come to the second structural part—a contrast. Down, it seems to me, down goes the voice, and all in a lower tone than before we resume the slight differences of intonation that will bring out the meanings of the words. The line—

"To make me scorned, vile, cast off, base, defied,"

surely indicates what is required of our voices. In the last line we intensify the depth of the voice (always remembering the dominant) and bring out

the last two words in much the same tone, that is in the lower notes, but divided by a suspension pause from the rest. Or, you can if you choose give a slight note of tragic-comic to the words "to die." But that is a matter for each reader to settle for himself. Indeed, all that I have said above, dealing particularly with this sonnet, is merely an indication of how I should vary the intonations myself. Each reader must for himself decide how the piece is to be read. It is the personal touch that gives quality and value to a reading. There is nothing more deadening in Reading Aloud than rules of thumb. Emphatically, I state that there are no such rules for good reading. But there are general indications.

Going back over this sonnet the attentive reader will find that the intonations alone will not be enough to bring out its amenities. There is, as I have said, the question of pace to be considered and the question of force. As to pace, I read the first line rather slowly, making slightly longer pauses between the words enumerated than in the body of the verse. I quicken the pace down to the end of the octave, and then slow gradually to the end of the piece, with a temporary quickening during the whole of the line—

"Did work, contrive, labour, conspire and swear."

As regards force I make very little alteration in this piece, reading it neither loud nor softly. In the sixth line, however, I speak a little louder, giving it crescendo to the end of line seven, but never increasing to a fortissimo. The last line of all I give

out a little louder with just a trace of a wailing note.

Some of the most difficult poems to render are the lyrics of Shakespeare. I think the reason is that these were written for music or, in any case, that many of them have been set to very beautiful music, from whose charm we cannot in our memories dissociate them. Still, they are there in all sorts of anthologies, challenging us to read them aloud.

“ Full fathom five thy father lies ;
 Of his bones are coral made ;
 Those are pearls that were his eyes ;
 Nothing of him that doth fade
 But doth suffer a sea-change
 Into something rich and strange.
 Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell :
 Ding-dong.
 Hark now I hear them,——
 Ding-dong, bell.”

First, look at the sounds. The sound *l* constantly recurs in *full, lies, coral, pearls, hourly, knell, bell*. Nasal consonants with peculiarly beautiful resonance come in *fathom, bones, nothing, him, change, into, something, strange, nymphs, ring, knell, ding-dong, now, them, ding-dong*. Read out aloud the vowel sounds (not their names), and note how many of them are long vowels. This length and the *l, m, n*, and *ng* sounds lend themselves particularly to holding on the vibrations of the vocal chords in such a way that we can without singing still approach a sort of music. So I read the whole of this poem

rather slowly, multiplying the stressed vowels and holding every sound I can for an appreciable time. The whole reading should be as it were bound together. It must not be snappy. It should not be :

Full (long followed by a comma), *fathom* (long followed by a comma), *five* (long followed by a comma), and so on ;

but

Full (long carrying on without a break in the vibrations of the chords to) *fathom* (half-long carrying on without a stop to) *five* (an extremely short suspension after the long vowel) *thy* (long carrying on to) *father*, and so on.

Now as to the intonation. The whole should, it seems to me, be rather grave, rather solemn, and therefore in the low notes. We begin rather low and deepen to the word "made," then rise a little and fall again to modulate. The "ding-dong" and "ding-dong, bell" should be low down and held. We are imitating in the medium of reading aloud the effect of the bell tolling. At the same time since this lyric has a definite place in "The Tempest" it will be wise for the reader to look up the play and the place of the lyric in the play in order to get the right atmosphere for the whole poem. As regards force it seems to me that the whole poem should be spoken neither too loudly nor too softly and with about the same force throughout.

Pitch, pace and loudness are not so varied in delicate, charming lyrics or prose pieces as they are in more robustious writing. So with rhythm. Sir

Walter Scott and Mr. Rudyard Kipling are full of throbbing stresses. Swinburne in the verse written in novel rhythms occupies an intermediate position. Wordsworth's rhythms are more elusive. Kipling's rhythms are like a mountain landscape, full of alternating peaks and valleys. The rhythms of Wordsworth are like a pleasant level country scene. The Canadian poet, Mr. Robert Service, who has incurred the sarcasm of some of our young poet-critics but is widely read by Canadians, employs rhythms which are strongly reminiscent of Kipling. He is at least sincere, since he writes of a life with which he is intimately acquainted, and I confess that I read his "Ballad of the Northern Lights" with considerable enjoyment. Let us take a stanza as an illustration of word-intonation, force and pace.

The poem describes the quest of a visionary gold mine in the North-West. It is told by a tatterdemalion in a drinking saloon.

" Day after day was sinister, and I fought fierce-eyed
 despair,
 And I clung to life, and I struggled on, I knew not why
 nor where,
 I packed my grub in short relays, and I cowered down
 in my tent,
 And the world around was purged of sound like a
 frozen continent.
 Day after day was dark as death, but ever and ever
 at nights,
 With a brilliancy that grew and grew, blazed up the
 Northern Lights.

They rolled around with a soundless sound like softly
bruised silk ;
They poured into the bowl of the sky with the gentle
flow of milk.
In eager, pulsing violet their whirling chariots came,
Or they poised above the Polar rim like a coronal of
flame.
From depths of darkness fathomless their lancing rays
were hurled,
Like the all-combining search-lights of the navies of
the world.
There on the roof-pole of the world as one bewitched
I gazed,
And howled and grovelled like a beast as the awful
splendours blazed.
My eyes were seared, yet thrall'd I peered through
the parki hood nigh blind ;
But I staggered on to the lights that shone, and never
I lagged behind."

My analysis of tone, force, and pace may seem crude until it is translated by the reader into action, which will probably be rough at first and then, according to the amount of good taste he possesses, smoothed down. The word "sinister" in the first line does not ask for a light and gay tone of voice. We begin, then, on a tone of gloom, the voice is heavy and deep, but not too deep, else we shall have no lower notes to employ for contrast purposes. "Fierce-eyed" may be said with a slight raising of the tone, with a sudden little blast of force. "And I clung to life . . ." rather low, perhaps a little hoarse, with a tone as dogged as we can make it. So the next line. But when we come to "the world

around was purged of sound " the voice should hush away and slow down on a slightly higher note than hitherto. " Day after day was dark as death," asks for a steadily deepening tone and a measured pace to contrast with the crescendo and quickening pace and rising tones of " a brilliancy that grew and grew, blazed up the Northern Lights." How will you say that one word " blazed up " ? (It is only one word in meaning, is it not ?)

" They rolled around." Try to bring out their sounds and the vowel sounds, deep and resonant but *muted*. In the next few words there are five s sounds and one z. And the s and z are of the same articulation, as we have seen in Chapter II. What is the effect of these hissing sounds ? Surely to bring out the meaning of " softly bruised silk." Well, let us bring it out. The word " softly " is an indication of how the line should be said, as regards loudness. The next line (" they poured . . . ") I say very gently, very clearly and rather slowly. It forms another contrast to the following line. " Whirling " is an indication to us. I quicken through this line and slow down suddenly on the word " poised." " From depths of darkness fathomless." Whatever depth and dulling of sound we can command, that should be the depth and dulling for these words, which contrast with the rising tone, the high note and sudden increase in force and pace of " their lancing rays were hurled " and the broad, connected, resonant treatment of the next line.

The next line again is a return to the speaker's self. " There on the roof-pole of the world." How

can you make your voice bring out the loneliness, the height, the smallness of the individual watching the Lights? And what treatment will you give to the word "bewitched"? How will you say the word "howled"? Don't be afraid of making a fool of yourself. How will you contrast with the word "howled" the word "grovelled"? How will you bring out the force of the words, "the awful splendours blazed," and how will you deal with the last two lines? Was the parki hood nigh blind? Or was it the speaker? In that case where will you make a sense-pause?

So it is that we take to pieces what we are reading in order to bring out the author's meaning to the utmost. Does it help to distinguish good from bad? What in literature is the good and what is the bad? Let us discuss that in the next chapter. Meanwhile here is a summary of the method of studying a piece. To our lazy and recalcitrant selves we say:—

(1) Where shall I make the pauses after completed pictures?

(2) Considering each phrase between the pauses separately, which word shall I emphasize? Shall I stress it heavily or lightly? Beside this principal word is there another word that should receive secondary stress?

(3) Considering the passage or poem as a whole, are there any broad divisions of feeling, emotion, argument, appeal? [See the pieces given for demonstration purposes.] Which are they? Where do the divisions come? How shall I make these divisions manifest to the listener? What sort of

voice shall I use for the different parts, soft or hard, velvety or ringing, etc. ?

(4) Considering each paragraph as a whole, where shall I raise the pitch, where drop the pitch of my voice ? Shall I read some parts louder or more softly than the rest ? If so, shall I speak loudly or softly, *suddenly* or by a *gradual* crescendo or diminuendo ? Where shall that crescendo or diminuendo begin ? And where end ?

Read out the piece aloud with special regard to all consonants, terminal consonants particularly. Read it again with special regard to the pauses. Then again with special regard to the stresses, etc. Finally, read it as a whole, taking into consideration all the above-mentioned points and any others you can think of. Read it thus several times until you are satisfied that you have arrived at your ideal of how it should be read.

CHAPTER X

THE poem entitled "The Hound of Heaven," by Francis Thompson, was disliked by Andrew Lang. But fifty thousand copies of it sold. Andrew Lang also disliked Meredith. To appreciate Meredith is to-day considered by many the touchstone of literary sensibility. The French critic and Academician Emile Faguet had some very cutting things to say about the early works of Maurice Barrès, who is now also an Academician, and likely to be a precious possession to posterity for precisely those qualities he began to show in such marked degree in his early works. In the words of Browning, "What porridge had John Keats?" We know how the critics of his day treated him. Mr. Rudyard Kipling, after having been the idol of the public, is now suffering from undeserved lack of popularity. One can multiply these cases of altering fashion, differing opinion. And they serve to show what? Unless it be that there are at present, even in a country of critics like France, few if any canons of criticism in literature. And if we could by any possible method of the intellect evolve a system by which infallibly all great works would be put into one division, all

bad work into another, would the private citizen, who is not a professional critic, but a man like Saint Paul, ambitious to be quiet, obey the dictates of this new criticism? What is literature? Is it saying something in prose or verse in a linked sweetness long drawn out? If that were so, what place would there be for rugged prose and rugged verse? Where should we place the Carlyles and the Brownings? Is it the telling of a story? If that were only so, what should we do with the Henry James men and the Merediths? If it were only analysis of character, what room would there be for many of Robert Louis Stevenson's stories? If it were morality, should we banish Sterne? If it were immorality, should we condemn Emerson? But if I say that literature is the translation into words, whether sweet or rugged, rhymed or unrhymed, accented or in prose, of any sincere result of honest experience, of any sincere emotion, of any sincere doubt, of any sincere belief, of any sincere enthusiasm, of any sincere hatred, then I think we have something to go upon. We come, as the Americans say, to bed-rock. Sincerity of experience, emotion, thought. That is the first essential. After that, since writing has its instruments, there is this to be judged, "With what success has the writer conveyed to the reader that which he experiences, feels, thinks?" If his writing leaves us unmoved, is he to be considered a failure? Surely not. For if the writer has his share in the business of transferring his experience, emotion, thought, so has the reader his share. The writer may write for the deaf and

the blind. He may write for those whose mental power of understanding and reacting is atrophied. We must ask ourselves if we have done our share of the business in reading, if we are as versed in reading as he in writing. We must—but not with an excessive effort—try to place ourselves at the same point as the writer when he was writing.

Now what does a writer do when he sets about to write? If he is transcribing experience he collects his memories of life together, and then selects from them just those elements which he feels to be necessary to the form and development of his narrative. If he is a man who has experienced or observed much, if he is a man who has tried to explain to himself the way of the world, he will show by his selection, by the ordering of his matter, by a preference for this or that group of natural phenomena the inner man that life and thought have made him. If he feels strongly he will translate his feeling into prose or verse. If he is an abstract thinker he will employ a system of logical development and building up that will take us with him to his conclusion. But in every case he will have to go through the following process. He will collect the experience, the emotions, the abstract thoughts, he will unconsciously formulate them in words, and in his mind there will actually be the more or less inhibited movements of the tongue and lips that correspond to the sounds he would make if he were speaking those words of narrative, emotion, thought. He hears in his mind the echo of the spoken word. Sometimes he is not content with hearing this echo. He speaks, he reads

out aloud what he has written in order that he may satisfy himself as to the *sound*.

Here is what Paul Bourget, the great French novelist and critic, says of Flaubert. I translate from the *Études de Psychologie Contemporaine*.

"The doctrine of Flaubert with regard to style is summed up in this formula of Buffon's which he quotes somewhere with admiration: 'All the intellectual beauties which are to be found in a beautiful style, all the correlated parts of which it is composed, are just so many truths as useful for the public mind as those which may form the subject-matter, and perhaps they are more precious than these. . . .' Which is as much as to say that the usual distinction between matter and form is a mistake in analysis. The idea is not behind the phrase like some article behind a shop-window; it is one with the sentence, since it is impossible to conceive a sentence which expresses no idea, or an idea which can be expressed without words. In the present state of our development of civilization, to think is to pronounce a sentence within ourselves, and the qualities of thought make up the qualities of that inner sentence. To write that sentence with all its qualities so that all the silent work of thought should be made perceptible and as it were concrete, such is, it seems to me, the object which every writer of talent sets before himself, and which Flaubert set before himself. Being a physiologist, he thought that the working of the brain influenced the whole system, and that is why he desired that a sentence should be susceptible of being read aloud: '*Badly constructed sentences,*' said he, '*cannot stand against this proof; they oppress the chest, restrict the pulsations of the heart, and thus are outside the workings of life.*' He therefore founded his theory of cadence on

an intimate relation between our physical person and our moral person, just as he based his theory of the choice of words and of their position on a very clear perception of the physiology of speech. . . . Deeply convinced of the truth of these principles, Flaubert passionately attempted to apply them in their severest form, trying over the rhythm of his periods on the scale of his own voice.' "

We know, too, that Stevenson would test the value of what he had written by reading it aloud or having it read aloud to him, and it is probable that most writers, who are at all mindful of the form and expression of what they write, read much if not all they have written aloud. That is the first great step towards engaging that sympathy of the reader which is necessary to perfect comprehension. But the reader must do his part. First by taking in with his eyes the written word, next by saying aloud the sounds that compose the words and form the rhythms of the sentences he will, in inverse order, put himself in the same place as the author, he will be imitating those mechanical actions which, whether inhibited or completed, were the concrete translation of the author's innermost being.

Now in what way does the writer show us some glimpse of this innermost being? Surely by his preferences, his choice of the form into which he throws his thoughts. If he is a man sensitive to impressions of sound, with a strong representative memory of sound he will refer constantly to such impressions. Or he may have a memory for the thing seen, its colour, its shape. Or he may pick

out from the store of his memory particular memories of touch. Or all his physical memories may be stronger than others. Or he may remember the impression which movements made upon him, and reproduce them. Or he may have a very weak memory for merely external sights, feeling, sounds, but a strong memory for the emotions which were caused by certain events, and he may react to some emotions more than to others. Again, he may have a strong liking, as Flaubert had, for the sounds of the words which express his thought, and in this case he will prefer certain repetitions of sound and concatenations of sounds rather than others. Or, on the other hand, he may care very little for the sounds of the words provided he can get exactly the words—Anglo-Saxon or of Latin origin or Norman French or exotic—which express the train of thought which is passing through his mind at the time. Still, I am inclined to believe that very few writers remain in the public memory who have not in their writing some quality of music in sound or rhythm, who have not written a page or two of prose or verse that, once read, haunts the reader's innermost memory. And however much we may affect to despise the public, we cannot deny that it is by the public of one generation or the public formed from accumulated generations of readers, that the writer lives.

We can judge of the value of a writer by his success in communicating to us his impressions, feelings, thoughts. When we have done our utmost to place ourselves so that we view life from his angle,

when we have attempted to enter into his musical scale and his system of rhythms, we can say with some approach to justice that as we are no nearer appreciating him than before there must be some fault in the writer. But not always so. For just as the writer has his preferences, so have we, and his choice of impressions, of emotions, of thoughts, of sounds, of rhythms may be directly calculated to excite our hostility as opposed to our own life-experience and choice and æsthetic sensibility. Even then I believe that out of those five elements of experience, emotion, thought, sound, and rhythm, there will be at least one or more with which we are in sympathy. So we may say that we enjoy a writer's versification but detest his views—as do some in the case of Swinburne—that we appreciate a prose author's power to communicate to us vivid impressions of the sights, sounds and happenings in his book, while we loathe his choice of such material as exhibiting a synthesis of experience hateful to us—as in the case of Anatole France—that we agree with the views and contentions of a writer while the absence of music in his prose jars upon us. And there is, of course, the test of sincerity. I submit that in reading aloud we become sharply aware of any writing that is produced for mere effect, without a close connection with honest emotion. I believe that anything merely rhetorical which is not the outcome of honest thought, emotion, experience, “gives itself away” as soon as we read it out aloud. It rings false. We find an insuperable difficulty in getting the right tone in which to express what we

are reading, search how we may. And that great difficulty is a sign that things are wrong with the piece we are attempting to read.

But there is difficulty and difficulty. For instance, Shakespeare's lyrics are sometimes difficult to read, but not because they are insincere. It is because some of us cannot at once get that lightness of voice treatment that is essential to their delicate beauty, a lightness as of gossamer. Practice, however, will help us here. But in the case of meretricious stuff no practice will help us to do anything but *conceal* its imperfections by emphasis or what not. And the effort to conceal is a sure judgment on the stuff. Where we find ourselves trying to overlay what seems to us blatant or untrue or lacking connection with the rest of what we are reading, we can be assured that something is wrong. For the true, beautiful, great things need no glozing or subduing or alteration. There is simplicity in their grandeur or their wit or their truth. For beauty of expression springs from the crystal depths of a man's being. Consider the writer writing. He is alone with himself, and with the paper on which he writes. He is undisturbed by an audience, as the lecturer is influenced and disturbed. There is nothing to make him self-conscious, that extraordinary word which means a state in which we are no longer ourselves but imitations of something we believe ourselves to be. He is like Moses on the mountain, face to face with the unseen. The silence which is around his mind *speaks* to him, bidding him say forth the vision of life, of beauty, or of thought which is within him.

And under the dominion of that silence, that vocal silence, which enwraps him, the long workings of his life-thoughts rush together and pour forth, transmuted into symbols which others can understand. May we not say that the greatest literature is that in which the form is most perfectly suited to the thing expressed, where the writer has succeeded not only in saying clearly what he wishes to say, but has communicated to us something of the thrill which ran through him as thought and word rushed together and were made one under the fusing blast of intellectual or sensorial emotion ?

And as we read aloud we shall in some degree feel too the combining of speech mechanism and thought which the author felt. The musical appeal to the ear will often fix in our memories lines and phrases in which thought was perfectly married to expression :—

“ Forlorn, the sound is like a bell
To toll me back to my sole self ; ”

and—

“ And to the antique order of the dead
I take the tongueless vows ; ”

and—

“ From a world more full of weeping than he can
understand ; ”

and—

“ With how slow steps, O moon, thou climb’st
the sky ! ”

and—

“ Les sanglots longs
Des violons
De l'automne
Blessent mon cœur
D'une langueur
Monotone ; ”

and—

“ Im wunderschönen Monat Mai
Als alle Knospen sprangen
Da ist in meinem Herzen
Die Liebe aufgegangen ; ”

and—

“ Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments.”

And so with many others, fragments of beauty captured and prisoned, precious possessions for ever. In our memories they form a kind of music which is at the back of all we think in after-years. Their sweetness or their passion or their truth are all about us like a fragrance. They stand in the shadows of our mind, silent guardians, until some sudden coming together of thought brings them forward into the centre of our consciousness, to dictate to our tongues those words which are at once themselves and the expression of themselves.

When we read with any practice and intelligence, and especially when we read aloud, we put ourselves in direct communication with the inner mind of the writer. From us, lonely that we are to him, lonely that he is, goes a swift and silent current. We

recognize that he is not different from ourselves, but of the same elements. His times may have been different, the manners and social conditions may have been different, his position in the world may have been different, his acts may have been such as to excite, had they been committed in our day, our anger or our loathing or our mockery; but the essential self of the writer we find to be not different from our own essential self. He and we are for the moment, and, by the magic of the Thought-made-Word, in touch with the Infinite. We can laugh with him in his tender mockery of the antinomy that is in all of us, between deepest thought and most superficial deed. We can weep with him at the tragedy of humanity where our bodies go about to commit little cruel, mean, profitless deeds when our souls are crying out in agony. We can pass with him into that trance of love which is always a uniting, whether it be with fellow-creature or with nature. We are lifted away from the petty details of a sequent life, and the God that we deny walks with us.

But supposing the views that the writer puts forward jar upon our inmost being, supposing, instead of being a road of sympathy between him and us, they are a high wall or a great gulf fixed,—what then? Then we shall—even if here and there some charm of expression, some happy naming, has not bitten into our memories—at least be able to grieve at the tragedy of a man who has found nothing in life to love. For such a man is one suffering for the lack of love, and indeed one who because he is seeking

love must believe in its existence. Men are only different from one another by their environment, their exterior. Deep down below action and will is the soul, helpless too often to make known its presence except in those cases where some trick of chance has torn the veil, where art—and especially the art of writing—acts as an interpreter, or where overpowering emotion sets us face to face with the Immutable. But when the veil is torn, when we can enter into communion with a man—dead it may be in the body, but immortal through his art—we are raised to sublime heights of existence, we survey life as from Heaven. If by any form of self-education we can attain closer communion with fellow-creature, we must for our own sake submit to its discipline. I believe Reading Aloud to be such a discipline, such an education, and such an interpreter of the hidden things.

APPENDIX

EXERCISES ON SOUNDS, THE PAUSE, THE STRESS AND INTONATION

EXERCISES FOR THE PRACTICE OF CLEAR SPEAKING.

EXERCISE I

1. Bad Ned wedded good Jane, Ned did. When he'd been wedded ten years, Ned wished Jane dead, but Jane lived on to spite Ned, Jane did. And then, Ned got one gun and done off Jane's head, Ned did, and ten men couldn't hold Ned when Jane was dead, they didn't. But Jane's head went and walked on Ned's bed, it did, and Ned wished Jane wasn't dead, didn't Ned?

2. Pape's pup leapt up to sip a sup, to sip a sup of soup, Bobby cropped up to trip Pape up, while the pup was swept off in a coop.

3. No soup? I have no sou. Soon you'll have sou and soup, Sue.

4. Away, I'll wail alone. No, wait till the low moon wanes upon the waves, then wake and wail. Wail to the Wain while I wade away through waves. Wail, wail away.

5. Tell Low to toot. Tell Lucy to take Tom in the motor to Tooting. Tell Lumpkin to try Lumkin for lettuces, little lettuces. Tell Low to hoot and toot, Tavy, and tell Lucy, see?

6. Does this shop stock shot silk socks with spots?

7. She sells sea-shells on the sea-shore.

8. Five wives weave withies.

9. Careless Clodia cast a crumb across the cloth.
Did careless Clodia cast a crumb across the cloth? If
careless Clodia cast a crumb across the cloth, where is
the crumb across the cloth which careless Clodia cast?

10. An Austrian army awfully arrayed,
Boldly by battery besieged Belgrade.
Cossack commanders, cannonading, come,
Dealing destruction's devastating doom;
Every endeavour engineers essay
For fame, for fortune, forming furious fray.
Gaunt gunners grapple, giving gashes good;
Heaves high his head heroic hardihood.
Ibrahim, Islam, Ismael, imps in ill,
Jostle John Jalovlitz, Jem, Joe, Jack, Jill;
Kick kindling Kutusoff, kings' kinsmen kill;
Labour low levels loftiest, longest lines;
Men march 'mid moles, 'mid mounds, 'mid
murderous mines.
Now nightfall's nigh, now needful nature nods,
Opposed, opposing, overcoming odds.
Poor peasants partly purchased, partly pressed,
Quite quaking, "Quarter! Quarter!" quickly
quest.
Reason returns, recalls redundant rage,
Saves sinking soldiers, softens signiors sage.
Truce, Turkey, truce! truce, treacherous Tartar
train!
Unwise, unjust, unmerciful Ukraine!
Vanish, vile vengeance! vanish, victory vain!
Wisdom wails war-wails warring words. What
were
Xerxes, Xantippe, Ximenès, Xavier?
Yet Yassy's youth, ye yield your youthful yest,
Zealously, zanies, zealously, zeal's zest.

11. So she went into the garden to cut a cabbage leaf to make an apple-pie, and at the same time a great she-bear, coming up the street, pops its head into the shop. "What! no soup?" So he died, and she very imprudently married the barber; and there were present the Picinnies, and the Joblillies, and the Garyulies, and the grand Panjandrum himself, with the little round button at top, and they all fell to playing the game of catch-as-catch-can, till the gunpowder ran out of the heel of their boots.

EXERCISE II.

Articulation Exercises

In the following exercises most terminal and some medial consonants of words have been omitted. The reader should supply them when reading out aloud. Terminal consonant sounds may be followed by a mute e. This e is always printed.

A

Irelan, befo-e the Engli conques, though neve governe by a despoti powe ha no Parliamen. Ho fa the Engli Parliamen itsel wa at tha ti-e modelle accordi to the presen for, is dispute amo anti-quarie. Bu we ha-e a the reaso i the worl to be assure tha a for of Parliamen su as Englan the enjoye, she instan-ly communicate to Irelan; an we ar equally su-e tha almos every successi-e improve-men in constitutiona liberty, a fas as i wa ma-e here, wa transmittē thitē. The feuda baron-e and the feuda knighthoo, the roo-s o ou primiti-e constitutio we-e early transplante into tha soil; an grew an flourishe the-e.

B

I was indee so-e time befo-e Lovel coul, through the thi atmosphe-e, perceive in wha sor of a de hi

frien ha constructe his retrea . It wa a lofty roo ,
 of middli si-e, obscurely lighte by high narro
 lattice window . One en was entirely occupie by boo
 shelve , grea-ly too limite i spa-e fo the numbe of
 volume place upo the , which we-e, therefore, draw
 up in ranks o two or three file dee , whi-e numberle
 others littere the floo an the tables, ami a chao of
 maps, engraving , scraps of parchmen , bundles of
 papers, pieces o ol armou , sword, dir-s, helmet , an
 Highlan targe-s.

C

There wa a ol ma of Quebe ,
 A beet-e ra over his ne ,
 But he crie , “ With a need-e I’ll slay you, O bee-e ! ”
 Tha angry ol ma of Quebe .

D

The-c was an Ol Perso who-e habi-s
 Induce hi to fee upo rabbi-s.
 Whe he’ eate eightee he turne perfec-y gree ,
 Upo which he relinquishe those habit .

EXERCISE III

Pay special attention to the consonants in clarendon type.

A

To improve the golden moment of opportunity, and catch the good that is within our reach, is the great art of life. Many wants are suffered, which might once have been supplied ; and much time is lost in regretting the time which had been lost before. At the end of every seven years comes the Saturnalian season, when the freemen of Great Britain may please themselves with the choice of their representatives. This happy

day has now arrived, somewhat sooner than it could be claimed.

B

Doctor Foster went to Gloucester

In a shower of rain,
He stepped in a puddle
Right up to his middle,
And never went there again.

C

Ride a-cock horse
To Banbury Cross
To see a fine lady a-riding a horse,
With rings on her fingers
And bells on her toes,
She shall have music
Wherever she goes.

EXERCISE IV

For clear articulation generally

Place a smooth, rounded pebble, about the size of a large hazel nut, in the mouth, under the tongue. Then read aloud the following.

(i)

Say, cruel Iris, pretty rake,
Dear mercenary beauty,
What annual offering shall I make
Expressive of my duty?

My heart, a victim to thine eyes,
Should I at once deliver,
Say, would the angry fair one prize
The gift, who slights the giver?

A bill, a jewel, watch, or toy,
 My rivals give—and let 'em ;
 If gems, or gold, impart a joy,
 I'll give them—when I get 'em.
 I'll give—but not the full-blown rose,
 Or rose-bud more in fashion ;
 Such short-lived offerings but disclose
 A transitory passion.
 I'll give thee something yet unpaid,
 Not less sincere than civil :
 I'll give thee—ah ! too charming maid,
 I'll give thee—to the devil.

GOLDSMITH.

(ii)

Now, when Shibli Bagarag ceased, Noorna bin Noorka cried, " Enough, O wondrous turner of verse, thou that art honest ! " And she laughed loudly, rustling like a bag of shavings, and rolling in her laughter.

Then said she, " O my betrothed, is not the thing thou wouldst say no other than—

" ' Each to his mind doth the fairest enfold,
 For broken long since was Beauty's mould ; ' "

and, ' Thou that art old, withered, I cannot flatter thee, as I can in no way pay compliments to the monkey's tail of high design ; nevertheless the sage would do thee honour ' ? So read I thy illustration, O keen of wit ! and thou art forgiven its boldness, my betrothed,—Wullahy ! utterly so."

Now the youth was abashed at her discernment, and the kindliness of her manner won him to say—

" There's many a flower of sweetness, there's many a gem of earth

Would thrill with bliss our being, could we perceive its worth.
 O beauteous is creation, in fashion and device !

If I have failed to think thee fair, 'tis blindness is my vice."

And she answered him—

“I’ve proved thy wit and power of verse
That is at will diffuse and terse:
Lest thou commence to lie—be dumb!
I am content: the time will come!”

MEREDITH.

EXERCISE V

Take a wooden match, and, having cut off the head, grip the end of the wood with the teeth, but do not let this end project into the inside of the mouth. Holding the match thus, read clearly the following pieces. The lips will be compelled to move more thoroughly in order to achieve clearness.

(i)

An Alphabetical Announcement

B. is the heroine, J. the hero, M.N.O. the villain, X. and Y. police constables, K. and L. idle oafs.

J. was adoring B.’s F.E.G. M.N.O. A.P.R.ed.

“G!” said M.N.O.

“Go to Q.!” said J.

“M.!” said M.N.O.

“A?” asked Jay.

“R!” answered M.N.O.

“F.U. don’t go,” said J., “I’ll W up!”

“O.K.” replied M.N.O. “I’ll go to S.X. F.U. like F. U’ll let me gaze once at B.’s F.E.G.”

J. then threw KN pepper at M.N.O., and K. and L. (idle oafs) very alphabetically intervened between them.

“R.U. going to stop?” Z P.C.’s X. and Y. (both being best Dorset).

“V vill!” replied J. and M.N.O. (both being best Danish).

Hereupon B. entered—

“ Y.R.U. here ? ” Z X.

“ O.P. quiet,” she replied.

“ Who R.U. ? ” Z Y.

“ On the strict Q.T.” said J. and M.N.O., “ V will tell U. “ C’est L ! ”

(ii)

The sun was shining on the sea,
Shining with all his might :
He did his very best to make
The billows smooth and bright—
And this was odd, because it was
The middle of the night.

The moon was shining sulkily,
Because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there
After the day was done—
“ It’s very rude of him,” she said,
“ To come and spoil the fun ! ”

The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud, because
No cloud was in the sky :
No birds were flying overhead—
There were no birds to fly.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand ;
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand :
“ If this were only cleared away,”
They said, “ it *would* be grand ! ”

" If seven maids with seven mops
 Swept it for half a year,
 Do you suppose," the Walrus said,
 " That they could get it clear ? "
 " I doubt it," said the Carpenter,
 And shed a bitter tear.

EXERCISES FOR TRILLING THE SOUND R

(1) Say as quickly as possible : td, td, td, td, dt,
 dt, dt, dt, trr, trr, trr, drr.

(2) A droll drunkard drawled a drunken drinking
 song and drained his dram to the dregs ; a trackless
 tram came trundling, through Thrington on the
 Trent.

(3) Rround and rround the rrugged rock the rraged
 rrascals rran.

(4) A rred rred rose on a hedge rrow briarr.

In the following poem the letter r has been printed
 as a capital. For the sake of practice, if for no other
 reason, the reader should trill this sound as in French
 or Welsh.

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan,
 A stately pleasuRe dome decRee :
 WheRe Alph, the sacRed RiveR Ran
 ThRough caveRns measuReless to man
 Down to a sunless sea.
 So twice five miles of feRtile gRound
 With walls and toweRs weRe giRdled Round :
 And theRe weRe gaRdens bRight with sinuous Rills
 WheRe blossomed many an incense beaRing tRee ;
 And heRe weRe foRests ancient as the hills,
 Enfolding sunny spots of gReeneRy.

But oh ! that deep Romantic chasm which slanted
 Down the gReen hill athwaRt a cedaRn coveR !
 A savage place as holy and enchanted
 As e'eR beneath a waning moon was haunted
 By woman wailing foR heR demon-loveR !
 And fRom this chasm, with ceaseless tuRmoil seething
 As if this eaRth in fast thick pants weRe bReathing,
 A mighty fountain momentarily was foRced ;
 Amid whose swift, half-inteRmittent buRst
 Huge fRagments vaulted like Rebounding hail
 OR chaffy gRain beneath the thResheR's flail :
 And mid these dancing Rocks at once and eveR
 It flung up momentarily the sacRed RiveR.
 Five miles meandeRing with a mazy motion
 ThRough wood and dale the sacRed RiveR Ran,
 Then Reached the caverRns measuReless to man,
 And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean :
 And mid this tumult Kubla heaRd fRom faR
 AncestRal voices pRophesying waR.

EXERCISES FOR CONTROLLING THE VELUM

Nasalisation is due, the reader is reminded, to the air being allowed to escape through the nose while we are speaking. The part of the soft palate which controls the direction of the air is the velum. Raise it against the back of the mouth and the air passes through the mouth, depress it and the air passes partly or entirely through the nose. For the sound *g* the air goes through the mouth, for the sound *ng* in *song* the air goes out through the nose.

A. Say alternately, in quick succession—

(1) *g ng g ng g ng g ng* (not *gee* and *enn gee*, but *g* and *ng*).

(2) m b m b m b m b m b.

(3) n d n d n d n d n d.

B. Say rapidly several times the following sentences, taking care not to nasalise except for n, m, and ng :—

(1) We do not mind what you like, but we object to being likened in your mind to a thing we do not think right.

(2) While you bike a mile we will rest on a stile.

VERSE IN WHICH THE NASALS ADD TO THE MUSIC

The Lark Ascending

He rises and begins to round,
 He drops the silver chain of sound,
 Of many links without a break,
 In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake,
 All intervolved and spreading wide,
 Like water dimples down a tide
 Where ripple ripple overcurls
 And eddy into eddy whirls ;
 A press of hurried notes that run
 So fleet they scarce are more than one,
 Yet changingly the trills repeat
 And linger ringing while they fleet,
 Sweet to the quick o' the ear and dear
 To her beyond the handmaid ear,
 Who sits beside our inner springs,
 Too often dry for this he brings,
 Which seems the very jet of earth
 At sight of sun, her music's mirth,
 As up he wings the spiral stair,
 A song of light and pierces air
 With fountain ardour, fountain play,
 To reach the shining tops of day,
 And drink in everything discerned

An ecstasy to music turned,
 Impelled by what his happy bill
 Disperses ; drinking showering still, . . .

GEORGE MEREDITH.

[The reader should compare this piece with Shelley's "Skylark." The complete poem is found in Vol. I. of Meredith's Poems, published by Messrs. Constable and Co.]

THE LOVER COMPLAINETH THE UNKINDNESS OF HIS LOVE

My lute, awake ! perform the last
 Labour, that thou and I shall waste,
 And end that I have now begun ;
 And when this song is sung and past,
 My lute be still ! for I have done.
 As to be heard where ear is none,
 As lead to grave in marble stone,
 My song may pierce her heart as soon,
 Should we then sigh, or sing, or moan ?
 No, no, my lute ! for I have done.
 The rocks do not so cruelly
 Repulse the waves continually,
 As she my suit and affection ;
 So that I am past remedy,
 Whereby my lute and I have done.
 Proud of the spoil that thou hast got
 Of simple hearts through love's shot,
 By whom unkind thou hast them won ;
 Think not he hath his vow forgot,
 Although my lute and I have done.
 Vengeance shall fall on thy disdain,
 That makest but game on earnest pain,
 Think not alone under the sun
 Unquit to cause thy lover's plain ;
 Although my lute and I have done.

May chance thee lie withered and old
In winter nights, that are so cold,
Plaining in vain unto the moon ;
Thy wishes then dare not be told
Care then who list, for I have done.

And then may chance thee to repent
The time that thou hast lost and spent
To cause thy lover's sigh and swoon ;
Then shalt thou know beauty but lent
And wish and want as I have done.

Now cease, my lute ! This is the last
Labour that thou and I shall waste
And ended is that we begun :
Now is this song both sung and past ;
My lute be still ! for I have done.

SIR THOMAS WYATT.

COME HOME, COME HOME

Come home, come home, and where is home for me,
Whose ship is driving o'er the trackless sea ?
To the frail bark here plunging on its way,
To the wild waters shall I turn and say
To the plunging bark, or to the salt sea foam,
You are my home ?

Fields once I walked in, faces once I knew,
Familiar things so old my heart believed them true,
These far, far back behind me lie, before
The dark clouds mutter, and the deep seas roar,
And speak to them that 'neath and o'er them roam
No words of home.

Beyond the clouds, beyond the waves that roar,
There may indeed, or may not be, a shore,
Where fields as green, and hands and hearts as true,
The old forgotten semblance may renew,
And offer exiles driven far o'er the salt sea foam
Another home.

But toil and pain must wear out many a day,
And days bear weeks, and weeks bear months away,
Ere, if at all, the weary traveller hear,
With accents whispered in his wayworn ear,
A voice he dares to listen to, say, Come
 To thy true home.

Come home, come home ! And where a home hath he
Whose ship is driving o'er the driving sea ?
Through clouds that mutter, and o'er waves that roar,
Say, shall we find, or shall we not, a shore
That is, as is not ship or ocean foam,
 Indeed our home ?

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH.

MEMORY

As a perfume doth remain
In the folds where it hath lain,
So the thought of you, remaining,
Deeply folded in my brain,
Will not leave me : all things leave me :
You remain.

Other thoughts may come and go,
Other moments I may know
That shall waft me, in their going,
As a breath blown to and fro,
Fragrant memories : fragrant memories
Come and go.

Only thoughts of you remain
In my heart where they have lain,
Perfumed thoughts of you, remaining,
A hid sweetness, in my brain.
Others leave me : all things leave me :
You remain.

ARTHUR SYMONS.

EXERCISES FOR ATTAINING FLUENCY

EXERCISE A

The following extracts are printed with blank spaces. These spaces do not represent words left out. The sense of each passage is complete as it stands, but the space is placed so as to compel your eye to run over to the next word. Read again and again until you can read each passage without a stumble or pause necessitated by the sense.

(1) Now with Ruark she exchanged
no syllable, and said not farewell to him when she
departed with Mashalleed, to encounter other tribes ;
and the chief was bound and conducted a
prisoner to the city of the inland sea, and cast
into prison in expectation of death the releaser,
and continued there well-nigh a year, eating the bitter
bread of captivity. In the evening of every seventh
day there came to him a little mountain
girl, that sat by him and leaned a lute
to her bosom, singing of the mountain and the
desert, but he turned his face from
her to the wall. One day she sang of
death the releaser, and Ruark thought, "'Tis come ! she
warneth me ! Merciful is Allah !" On the
morning that followed Ukleet entered the
cell, and with him three slaves, blacks, armed with
scimitars. So Ruark stood up and bore
witness to his faith, saying, " Swift with the
stroke ! " But Ukleet exclaimed,
" Fear not, the end is not
yet."

(2) To Peace, however, in this vortex
of existence can the Son of Time not
pretend : still less if some spectre

haunt him from the Past ; and the Future
 is wholly a Stygian darkness, spectre-
 bearing. Reasonably might the Wanderer exclaim to
 himself : Are not the gates of this world's
 happiness inexorably shut against thee ? hast
 thou a hope that is not
 mad ? Nevertheless one may still murmur
 audibly, or in the original Greek, if that
 suit thee better, " Whoso can work on
 Death will start at no shadows."
 From such meditations is the
 Wanderer's attention called outwards ; for
 now the Valley closes
 in abruptly, intersected by a
 huge mountain mass, the stony
 water-worn ascent of which is
 not to be accomplished on horse
 back.

(3) It is not fair to judge of the temper
 or dispositions
 of any set of men, when
 they are composed and at
 rest
 from their conduct
 or their expressions in a
 state of disturbance
 and irritation. It is besides a
 very great mistake
 to imagine
 that
 mankind follow up practically
 any speculative principle,
 either
 of government or
 of freedom, as far

as it will
 go in argument and logical
 illation. We Englishmen stop very
 short of the principles upon which we support any given
 part of our Constitution ; or even the
 whole of it together. I could easily if I
 had not already tired you, give you very striking and
 convincing instances of it. This is
 nothing but what is
 natural and proper. All government,
 indeed every human benefit and enjoyment, every
 virtue, and every prudent act, is founded on
 compromise and barter.

EXERCISE B

In the following extract the blank spaces have been replaced by black lines. Otherwise the exercise is the same. The reader's object is to read without stumbling or hesitating.

(1) To improve the golden ——— moment of opportunity, and catch ——— the ——— good that ——— is within our ——— reach, is the great ——— art of life. Many ——— wants are suffered, which ——— might ——— once have been ——— supplied ; and much time is lost in ——— regretting the time which had been lost before.

At the end of ——— every seven years comes ——— the Saturnalian ——— season, when the ——— freemen of Great ——— Britain may please ——— themselves with the choice of their representatives. This happy day has now arrived, somewhat sooner than it could be ——— claimed.

To ——— select and depute those, by whom laws are to be made, and taxes to ——— be ———

granted, is a ——— high dignity and an important trust : and it is the business of every elector to consider how this dignity may be well ——— sustained and this ——— trust faithfully ——— discharged.

(2) Parson ——— Adams came to the house of ——— Parson ——— Trulliber, whom he found stript into his ——— waistcoat, with an apron ——— on, and a pail in ——— his hand, just come ——— from ——— serving his hogs ; for ——— Mr. Trulliber was ——— a parson on ——— Sundays, but ——— all the other ——— six might ——— more ——— properly ——— be ——— called ——— a farmer. He ——— occupied a small ——— piece of land of his own, besides which he rented a considerable deal ——— more. His wife milked his ——— cows, managed his dairy, and followed the markets with butter and eggs. The hogs fell chiefly to his ——— care, which he carefully ——— waited on at home and attended to fairs ; on which occasion he was liable to many jokes, his own ——— size being with ——— much ale rendered little ——— inferior to that of the beasts he sold.

(3) On all occasions we ought to distinguish the serious, modest, ingenuous man of sense, who hath scruples about religion, and behaves like a ——— prudent man in doubt, from the ——— minute philosophers, those profane and conceited ——— men, who must needs proselyte ——— others to their own doubts. When one ——— of this ——— stamp presents himself, we should consider ——— what species ——— he ——— is ——— of : Whether a ——— first or a second ——— hand philosopher, a libertine, ——— a scorner ——— or ——— a sceptic ? Each character ——— requiring special ——— treatment.

EXERCISE C

Here the blanks or black lines are replaced by the word FLUENCY. The reader must accustom himself to *ignore* this word, and carry on the sense.

Things were at this FLUENCY crisis when a material FLUENCY accident fell FLUENCY out. For upon the highest corner of a FLUENCY large window there dwelt a FLUENCY certain spider, swollen FLUENCY up to the FLUENCY first FLUENCY magnitude by the destruction FLUENCY of infinite numbers of flies, whose spoils FLUENCY lay FLUENCY scattered before the gates of his FLUENCY palace, like human bones FLUENCY before the cave of FLUENCY some giant. The avenues to his castle were guarded with turnpikes and palisadoes, all after the modern way of fortification. After you had passed several courts you came to the centre, wherein you might behold the constable himself in his FLUENCY own lodgings which had FLUENCY high FLUENCY windows fronting at each avenue, and ports to FLUENCY sally out upon all occasions of FLUENCY prey or defence.

EXERCISES ON THE PAUSE

In the following extracts in prose and verse all the punctuation has been removed save the full stops. The reader must himself mark all the pauses necessary to bring out the meaning of what he is reading. It is too often taken for granted that it is sufficient to pause at the commas, semicolons, and colons of punctuation. The chapter on the Pause ought to have convinced the reader that this is not so.

Mark and make, when reading aloud, the pauses in the following :—

A. Keats

Now if this earthly love has power to make
Men's being mortal immortal to shake

Ambition from their memories and brim
Their measure of content what merest whim
Seems all this poor endeavour after fame
To one who keeps within his steadfast aim
A love immortal an immortal too ?
Look not so wildered for these things are true
And never can be born of atomies
That buzz about our slumbers like brain-flies
Leaving us fancy-sick. No no I'm sure
My restless spirit never could endure
To brood so long upon one luxury
Unless it did though fearfully espy
A hope beyond the shadow of a dream.

B. *King Lear*, i, 20

Gloster. These late eclipses in the sun and moon
portend no good to us though the wisdom of nature can
reason it thus and thus yet nature finds itself scourged
by the sequent effects love cools friendship falls off
brothers divide in cities mutinies in countries discord
in palaces treason and the bond cracked between father
and son. This villain of mine comes under the pre-
diction there's son against father the king falls from
bias of nature there's father against child. We have
seen the best of our time machinations hollowness
treachery and all ruinous disorders follow us disquietly
to our graves. Find out this villain Edmund it shall
lose thee nothing do it carefully. And the noble and
true-hearted Kent banished ! His offence honesty !
Strange ! Strange !

C. Carlyle, *French Revolution*, "Varennes "

In this manner however has the Day bent down-
wards. Wearied mortals are creeping home from their

field-labour the village artisan eats with relish his supper of herbs or has strolled forth to the village street for a sweet mouthful of air and human news. Still summer-eventide everywhere ! The great Sun hangs flaming on the utmost North-west for it is his longest day this year. The hill-tops rejoicing will ere long be at their ruddiest and blush Good-night. The thrush in green dells on long-shadowed leafy spray pours gushing his glad serenade to the babble of brooks grown audibler silence is stealing over the Earth. Your dusty Mill of Valmy as all other mills and drudgeries may furl its canvas and cease swashing and circling. The swinkt grinders in this Treadmill of an Earth have ground out another Day and lounge there as we say in village-groups movable or ranked on stone-seats their children mischievous imps sporting about their feet. Unnotable hum of sweet human gossip rises from this village of Sainte-Menehould as from all other villages. Gossip mostly sweet unnotable for the very Dragoons are French and gallant nor as yet has the Paris-and-Verdun Diligence with its leathern bag rumbled in to terrify the minds of men.

D. Sheridan : Speeches

Should a stranger survey the land formerly Surajah Dowlah's and seek the cause of its calamity should he ask what monstrous madness had ravaged thus with widespread war what desolating foreign foe what disputed succession what religious zeal what fabled monster has stalked abroad and with malice and mortal enmity to man has withered with the grip of death every growth of nature and humanity the answer will be if any answer dare be given no alas this damp of death is the mere effusion of British amity we smile under the pressure of their support we writhe under the grip of their pestiferous alliance.

E. Mr. Winston Churchill: Speech of November 15,
1913

What a lot a little more good will would do. There is the question of armaments. France Germany and Russia have added in the last five years more than 70 million pounds a year to their annual expenditure on their armaments. Then there has been a very heavy expenditure on the navies and we of course have had to expend a great sum also. The question I ask is this, are we any safer? every nation do we feel any safer for this immense sacrifice which has been imposed on all? Do you sometimes feel when you look at these things that it is all a mood that we are separated only by the thickness of a sheet of paper from a state of world-consciousness and world-confidence a world of international amity and general good will which would render these lamentable preparations unnecessary or capable of immense abatement and would afford relief immeasurable to the toiling millions of mankind?

F. My true love hath my heart and I have his
By just exchange one for the other given
I hold his dear and mine he cannot miss
There never was a better bargain driven
His heart in me keeps him and me in one
My heart in him his thought and senses guides
He loves my heart for once it was his own
I cherish it because in me it bides
His heart his wound received from my sight
My heart was wounded with his wounded heart
For as from me on him his hurt did light
So still methought in me his hurt did smart
Both equal hurt in this change sought our bliss
My true love hath my heart and I have his.

EXERCISES ON THE STRESS WORD

All the pieces quoted in this book may serve as exercises for this part of Reading aloud. But a few short, incomplete extracts are here added. • The reader should ask himself this question, "What is the word in this phrase, this sentence, on which I must let the voice weigh slightly so as to bring out to the full the author's meaning? Is there such a word in this line, this phrase, this sentence?"

A

Over the waters in the vaporous west
The sun goes down as in a sphere of gold,
Behind the outstretched city, which between,
With all that length of domes and minarets,
Athwart the splendour, black and crooked runs
Like a Turk verse along a scimitar.

B

She sat, when I first saw her, alone, throned upon a towering pile of money-bags, dark-brown and green, from whose open mouths rolled pieces of gold, making a golden stream about the green and brown. She was clad in a garment of shimmering gold. Gold was about her arms and about her forehead. Behind her stood mighty pillars of gold, in a well-balanced perspective—to the left, five; to the right, further apart, three—so that the lines of the pillars and of the mound of gold on which she sat, fell into a decorative arrangement, barred vertically against a flat, luminous landscape, over which the sun shone like a mighty gold coin in the water-green sky. She sat alone and durst not leave her gold, for it was might and company and magic. I looked into her eyes which stared before her, but nothing

was to be seen therein, no reflection, no thought, but only the depth of a shallow soul cupped in the crystal of eternity.

C

Am I failing ? For no longer can I cast
A glory round about this head of gold.
Glory she wears but springing from the mould ;
Not like the consecration of the Past.
Is my soul beggared ? Something more than earth
I cry for still : I cannot be at peace
In having Love upon a mortal lease.

D. John Tillotson : Sermons.

(In the book from which the following extract was taken many words are printed in italics, evidently to show the stresses which the preacher himself used in special places. These italics, for the purpose of this exercise, have been eliminated.)

. . . In short, that we live, and that we live well, in any tolerable condition either of safety or of plenty, and that we are able to call anything our own for one day, or for one hour ; that we are not in perpetual terror and apprehension of mortal dangers, and that we are at any time free from the invasion of what we at present possess, by the fraud and force of others, is solely the effect of this great blessing and divine appointment of government, to preserve the peace of humane society, and by wise and wholesome laws, to tie up men's hands from mutual injuries and violence. . . .

And now to apply this to ourselves, and to the occasion of this day. By all that hath been said, we cannot but be convinced what cause we have to bless God for that happy government which we live under, that excellent

constitution, under the gentle influences whereof we enjoy more liberty, more plenty, and more security from all manner of injury and oppression, than any nation this day upon the face of the earth. Therefore with what thankfulness should we this day commemorate the happy restoration of this government to us, after the memorable distinctions and confusions of twenty years, by the restoration and return of our banished sovereign, in so peaceable, and yet so wonderful a manner, that a remembrance of it, even at this distance, is almost still a matter of amazement to us.

E. Professor A. F. Pollard. *The History of England.*

It is mainly a battle of phrases, in which few pause to examine what their opponents or they themselves mean by the epithets they employ. In the sense in which the individualist uses the term socialist, there are hardly any socialists, and in the sense in which the socialist uses the term individualist there are practically no individualists. In reality we are all both individualists and socialists. It is a question of degree and not of dogma ; and most people are at heart agreed that some economic socialism is required in order to promote a certain amount of moral and intellectual individualism.

EXERCISES ON "ATMOSPHERIC" TONE, AND "STRUCTURAL" TONES.

- (1) Read through the following pieces rapidly, and determine in your own mind what tone you will adopt as a dominant to the whole. (2) Next look for the parts of the story or poem which show the development from beginning to climax and end, or give the contrasts which indirectly bring out the author's intention. (All other complete pieces in this book will serve for this purpose also.)

THE OVAL PORTRAIT

The château into which my valet had ventured to make forcible entrance, rather than permit me, in my desperately wounded condition, to pass a night in the open air, was one of those piles of commingled gloom and grandeur which have so long frowned among the Apennines, not less in fact than in the fancy of Mrs. Radcliffe. To all appearance it had been temporarily and very lately abandoned. We established ourselves in one of the smallest and least sumptuously furnished apartments. It lay in a remote turret of the building. Its decorations were rich, yet tattered and antique. Its walls were hung with tapestry and bedecked with manifold and multiform armorial trophies, together with an unusually great number of very spirited modern paintings in frames of rich golden arabesque. In these paintings, which depended from the walls not only in their main surfaces, but in very many nooks which the bizarre architecture of the château rendered necessary—in these paintings my incipient delirium, perhaps, had caused me to take deep interest; so that I bade Pedro to close the heavy shutters of the room—since it was already night—to light the tongues of a tall candelabrum which stood by the head of my bed—and to throw open far and wide the fringed curtains of black velvet which enveloped the bed itself. I wished all this done that I might resign myself, if not to sleep, at least alternately to the contemplation of these pictures, and the perusal of a small volume which had been found upon the pillow, and which purported to criticise and describe them.

Long, long I read—and devoutly, devotedly I gazed.

Rapidly and gloriously the hours flew by, and the deep midnight came. The position of the candelabrum displeased me, and outreaching my hand with difficulty, rather than disturb my slumbering valet, I placed it so as to throw its rays more fully upon the book.

But the action produced an effect altogether unanticipated. The rays of the numerous candles (for there were many) now fell within a niche of the room which had hitherto been thrown into deep shade by one of the bedposts. I thus saw in vivid light a picture all unnoticed before. It was the portrait of a young girl just ripening into womanhood. I glanced at the painting hurriedly, and then closed my eyes. Why I did this was not at first apparent even to my own perception. But while my lids remained thus shut, I ran over in mind my reason for so shutting them. It was an impulsive movement to gain time for thought—to make sure that my vision had not deceived me—to calm and subdue my fancy for a more sober and more certain gaze. In a very few moments I again looked fixedly at the painting.

That I now saw aright I could not and would not doubt ; for the first flashing of the candles upon that canvas had seemed to dissipate the dreamy stupor which was stealing over my senses, and to startle me at once into waking life.

The portrait, I have already said, was that of a young girl. It was a mere head and shoulders, done in what is technically termed a *vignette* manner—much in the style of the favourite heads of Sully. The arms, the bosom, and even the ends of the radiant hair melted imperceptibly into the vague yet deep shadow which formed the background of the whole. The frame was oval, richly gilded and filigreed in *Moresque*. As a

thing of art, nothing could be more admirable than the painting itself. But it could have been neither the execution of the work, nor the immortal beauty of the countenance, which had so suddenly and so vehemently moved me. Least of all, could it have been that my fancy, shaken from its half slumber, had mistaken the head for that of a living person. I saw at once that the peculiarities of the design, of the *vignetting*, and of the frame, must have instantly dispelled such idea—must have prevented even its momentary entertainment. Thinking earnestly upon these points, I remained, for an hour perhaps, half sitting, half reclining, with my vision riveted upon the portrait. At length, satisfied with the true secret of its effect, I fell back within the bed. I had found the spell of the picture in an absolute *lifelikeliness* of expression, which, at first startling, finally confounded, subdued, and appalled me. With deep and reverent awe I replaced the candelabrum in its former position. The cause of my deep agitation being thus shut from view, I sought eagerly the volume which discussed the paintings and their histories. Turning to the number which designated the oval portrait, I there read the vague and quaint words which follow :—

“ She was a maiden of rarest beauty, and not more lovely than full of glee. And evil was the hour when she saw, and loved, and wedded the painter. He, passionate, studious, austere, and having already a bride in his Art : she a maiden of rarest beauty, and not more lovely than full of glee ; all light and smiles, and frolicsome as the young fawn ; loving and cherishing all things ; hating only the Art which was her rival ; dreading only the palette and brushes and other untoward instruments which deprived her of the countenance of her lover. It was thus a terrible thing for this lady to

hear the painter speak of his desire to portray even his young bride. But she was humble and obedient, and sat meekly for many weeks in the dark high turret-chamber where the light dripped upon the pale canvas only from overhead. But he, the painter, took glory in his work, which went on from hour to hour, and from day to day. And he was a passionate, and wild, and moody man, who became lost in reveries ; so that he *would* not see that the light which fell so ghastly in that lone turret withered the health and the spirits of his bride, who pined visibly to all but him. Yet she smiled on and still on, uncomplainingly, because she saw that the painter (who had high renown) took a fervid and burning pleasure in his task, and wrought day and night to depict her who so loved him, yet who grew daily more dispirited and weak. And in sooth some who beheld the portrait spoke of its resemblance in low words, as of a mighty marvel, and a proof not less of the power of the painter than of his deep love for her whom he depicted so surpassingly well. But at length, as the labour drew nearer to its conclusion, there were admitted none into the turret ; for the painter had grown wild with the ardour of his work, and turned his eyes from the canvas rarely, even to regard the countenance of his wife. And he *would* not see that the tints which he spread upon the canvas were drawn from the cheeks of her who sat beside him. And when many weeks had passed, and but little remained to do, save one brush upon the mouth and one tint upon the eye, the spirit of the lady again flickered up as the flame within the socket of the lamp. And then the brush was given, and then the tint was placed ; and, for one moment, the painter stood entranced before the work which he had wrought ; but in the next, while he yet gazed, he grew tremulous and very pallid, and aghast, and crying

with a loud voice, ' This is indeed *Life* itself ! ' turned suddenly to regard his beloved—*she was dead ! "*

EDGAR ALLAN POE.

B

MIDSUMMER NOON

I can hear the light laughter of little waves leaping,
And the deep joyous laughter of great waves that boom,
And above them the white gulls are gladsomely
sweeping,

And the children are splashing where white surf is
creeping,

And over the hills there's a town and a tomb

And a dear friend sleeping.

I can see on the sky-line a ship that is peeping
With happy white sails through the sun-golden gloom,
And here in the sea-wind are merry men reaping
The gold of the meadows and no-one is weeping. . . .

And over the hills there's a town and a tomb

And a dear friend sleeping.

THOMAS MOULT.*

THE SITTING BUDDHAS

I came to a vast enclosure and I was told that it was the Garden of Intellectual Society. And I found it surrounded by a high hedge of thorns whereon grew a profusion of red stars and white stars amid the waxen green leaves, but under the leaves were cruel spikes an inch and two inches long. The only entrance was narrow, and a Cat guarded it, a monstrous cat which smiled fiercely at any of the non-elect who attempted to enter. But I had been told that Flattery would

* Reprinted with the courteous permission of the editor of " Rhythm."

soften her, Flattery or a splendid Arrogance. I adopted the easier means and spoke to her smoothly, comparing her smile to the breaking of day and her purr to the songs of Apollo. Rubbing herself slowly against the lintel of interwoven reeds she drew aside sufficiently to let me pass.

I found within a great and barren desert, parched and sad, void of life it seemed at first. But at last I saw in the distance a knot of human beings like palm-trees about a central monolith in the Sahara, and again at some distance from them another group and yet again farther still, a third group and a fourth and many more. Between them the burning sands spread immense and the drought slew life and utter desolation was everywhere. I came near to one of the groups and found it to consist of a Great Man and his followers. The leader sat on a stone seat in the centre, raised above the heads of the crowd, with his eyes half-closed like those of a Sitting Buddha, and he nodded complacently as a stream of wisdom flowed from his mouth. His followers drank of the stream and bathed in it and were loud with praise of him. At any compliment more fulsome than the rest the Great Man would smile more broadly and increase his literary output, and the incense that was burned to him filled his brain with fumes, and his mouth with brilliant aphorisms. But the stream of wisdom went no farther than his admirers, and about them all the parched desert cried for moisture. And so it was with all the groups, dazzling streams of wit flowing into oblivion amid the dreadful dryness of the plain.

At last in the far distance, I found another kind of crowd. It was without leaders and bore the stigmata of pain and suffering, and those that composed it cried aloud in their agony for the precious waters of life. But there was no one to answer them, for man's thirst is not

assuaged by wit or wisdom, but by the sweet waters that flow out from a humble heart. And so I stood contemplating, a murmur arose over the desert and a fluttering breeze breathed on us and a voice said, "Beyond the thorns there are sweet waters." Then the crowd turned as one man and fled towards the confines of the desert and fought their way, torn and mangled, through the cruel spikes of the thorn and found a man bleeding in his forehead and in his hands because he defended Love and Truth, and a woman weeping over her dead child. And they bathed all of them in the tears of the woman and in the blood of the man, and the Peace of the Brotherhood of Souls descended upon them all. And about the stream of blood and tears broke roses and a thousand cool grasses and foliage and flowers.

But in the desert the Sitting Buddhas continued to proclaim each one his view of life, and as they sat they and their followers were parched and withered, and the stream of wit ran into the sands, and was utterly lost.

BOADICEA

When the British warrior queen,
Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought with an indignant mien,
Counsel of her country's gods,
Sage beneath a spreading oak
Sat the Druid, hoary chief,
Every burning word he spoke
Full of rage and full of grief.

Princess, if our aged eyes
Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
'Tis because resentment ties
All the terrors of our tongues.

Rome shall perish,—write that word
In the blood that she has spilt ;
Perish hopeless and abhorred,
Deep in ruin as in guilt.

Rome for empire far renowned,
Tramples on a thousand states,
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground,—
Hark, the Gaul is at her gates.

Other Romans shall arise,
Heedless of a soldier's name,
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
Harmony the path to fame.

Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Armed with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

Regions Cæsar never knew,
Thy posterity shall sway,
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they.

Such the bard's prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She with all a monarch's pride,
Felt them in her bosom glow,
Rushed to battle, fought and died,
Dying, hurled them at the foe.

Ruffians ! pitiless as proud,
 Heaven awards the vengeance due ;
 Empire is on us bestowed,
 Shame and ruin wait for you.

WILLIAM COWPER.

EXERCISES ON THE SEPARATE INTONATIONS OF WORDS OR PHRASES

What intonation, what variation of musical note will you give to the words or phrases in the following pieces ? The other extracts in this book may be studied for the same purpose.

If man might know
 The ill he must undergo,
 And shun it so,
 Then it were good to know ;
 But if he undergo it,
 Though he know it,
 What boots him to know it ?
 He must undergo it.

THE PRIDE OF YOUTH

Proud Maisie is in the wood,
 Walking so early ;
 Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
 Singing so rarely.

“ Tell me, thou bonny bird,
 When shall I marry me ? ”
 —“ When six braw gentlemen
 Kirkward shall carry ye.”

“ Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly ? ”
—“ The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

“ The glowworm o’er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady ;
The owl from the steeple sing
Welcome, proud lady.”

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

I dreamt I saw a silver city raise
Its myriad peaks amid a golden plain
Of mellowing wheat. Down every busy lane
Sped happy men and in the devious ways
Clanged engines safe and beautiful. The praise
Of life echoed about, the joyous train
Of workers lauded work till eve again
Homeward to wife and children turned their gaze.

I woke and through the grey dawn heard the truth,
Saw shuffling crowds foreboding famine dread,
Saw women toiling for their husband’s bread,
Heard cries of children motherless. No ruth
In the loud streets that slay our magic Youth,
No home, no hope, for Work and Love are fled.

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